RELIGION

The Wicket Gate. By the Rev. G. A. Studdert-Kennedy, D.D., M.C., C.F. New York: George H. Doran Co. $1.50.

Of this latest book of a man who has gained an enormous ascendancy among us in America, the author writes: "There is scarcely a page of it which is not an attempt to answer questions put to me in conversation after meetings and speeches" (page vii). It is the book of an evangelist. It shows on every page a delicate awareness of, and a relentness courage toward, the very real difficulties of the ordinary man. There is nothing superfluous in it, and there is no place (which the reviewer has been able to discover) where an honest difficulty has not been honestly met. The purpose of the book is to proffer the bread of life to the hungry soul, or, to change the figure, to find the "wicket gate" through which the soul may pass into the Presence. It is divided into chapters according to the sentences of the Lord's Prayer, under which the author deals trenchantly with those problems which arise in the mind of the earnest, but not yet convinced, searcher for the truth of religion. There are innumerable quotable passages, as for example: "When men seek in the Creeds exact and exhaustive scientific statements of ultimate truth, they seek what can never be found. There is no exact and exhaustive expression of final truth, for the very good and sufficient reason that we do not know it, and never shall know it, until the earth is rolled up as a garment, and we all come to the measure of the fullness of the stature of Christ" (page 29). The charm of a somewhat poetic style, the restrained appeal to the emotions, the strikingly simple analysis of doubts and difficulties—whether moral, rational, intellectual, or practical, ranging from modern biology to modern psychology—constitute the richness of this bit of popular apologetic. To those who know *I Believe* and *Lies*, *The Wicket Gate* will be indispensable, and needs no further recommendation.

~~M. J. L.~~ R. W. Younkin

Marion J. Lindsley

Corner Book

THE WICKET GATE

G. A. STUDDERT KENNEDY

Books by

G. A. STUDDERT KENNEDY

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PEACE RHYMES OF A PADRE
WHY AREN'T ALL THE BEST CHAPS CHRISTIANS?
THE SORROWS OF GOD AND OTHER POEMS

THE WICKET GATE *or* PLAIN BREAD

BY

G. A. STUDDERT KENNEDY

NEW YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

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1923

THE WICKET GATE

HC

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Dedication

TO

THE REV. P. T. R. KIRK

General Director of the Industrial Christian Fellowship, and his staff at Fellowship House, together with all my comrades and colleagues in that great work, this book is dedicated in affectionate gratitude for the help of their enthusiasm and unfailing friendship.

Author's Foreword

To the making of this book, inadequate as it is, more people have contributed than I could possibly mention by name. Travelling round England, and talking with all sorts and conditions of men, stocks one's mind with ideas the genesis and origin of which it would be impossible to trace. There is scarcely a page of it which is not an attempt to answer questions put to me in conversation after meetings and speeches. It is of course inadequate, but if it provokes thought and prayer, it will have accomplished its object. I must acknowledge with the greatest gratitude the help of my colleagues and comrades in the Industrial Christian Fellowship, not only because of the debt I owe to them and their unselfish enthusiasm, but also to absolve them from all responsibility for the opinions expressed in the book. For these I alone am responsible. If there be anything in it which is not in accordance with God's Will, may He forgive me and undo the evil I have done.

G. A. STUDDERT KENNEDY.

WORCESTER,
September 11*th*, 1923.

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THE WICKET GATE

"As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a den, and laid me down in that place to sleep; and, as I slept, I dreamed a dream. I dreamed, and behold, I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back. I looked, and saw him open the book, and read therein; and, as he read, he wept and trembled; and not being able longer to contain, he brake out with a lamentable cry saying, 'What shall I do?' . . . I saw also that he looked this way and that way, as if he would run; yet stood still, because, as I perceived, he could not tell which way to go. . . . Then said Evangelist pointing with his finger over a very wide field, Do you see yonder wicket gate? The Man said, No. Then said the other, Do you see yonder shining light? He said, I think I do. Then said Evangelist, Keep that light in your eye, and go up directly thereto: so shalt thou see the gate; at which when thou knockest, it shall be told thee what thou shalt do."

My mind goes back many years to the days when, as a very small boy, I was called with my brothers into my mother's room on a Sunday afternoon to have what we called Scripture Lessons. I took no active part in the lessons, except that at a certain point, mother always said to me, "Tell me how many there be?" and I said "Ten." I had no notion of

Bunyan-

what the Commandments were, but I knew that, whatever they were, there were ten of them, and so I played my part. But the real interest of the lessons began for me when my mother produced an old book with brown battered covers, and began to read—with a soft Irish brogue—the immortal prose of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. What the great opening words meant to me, at that age, I cannot remember; but they come back to me now filled with new meaning, and big with lessons for this present day. Such a perfect picture is word-painted there of the age in which we live. A man clothed with rags. There are thousands of them—men and women clothed with rags. All the world over they stand. Russia and Central Europe are full of them. In our own towns they stand at the street corners, idle, and growing desperate. And even those of us who are better clothed, and better fed, are beginning, thank God, to feel that our prosperity is rags, dirty rags, while these disgraceful sights are seen. To walk up New Bond Street, and pass an ex-Service man selling laces, or to pass from the Savoy Hotel Dining-Room to the door of the Labour Exchange in Bethnal Green, makes a decent man feel sick and dirty; this luxury is loathsome—the world is clothed in filthy rags. We want a spiritual bath and a change of underclothes. Some of us wear fancy waistcoats, but all our shirts are dirty while this vile poverty exists. The essence of poverty, as of everything else, is spiritual. There was a famine in the soul of the Prodigal Son, before he went into the fields to feed the swine; and there was a famine in the soul of Europe, before we heard her million hungry children cry for bread. The Prodigal did not change his state when he drank swill instead of wine; he only realised it. He lived with the pigs all the

time until he turned back to the Father. We all do. Luxury and poverty are the marks of the far-off land. Real poverty is never poverty of money or of goods. There is always much more wealth in the world than it can possibly consume.* God has always given enough and to spare. It is we who cannot realise our riches, because we are starved in mind and soul, and will not come to Him that we may have life, and have it more abundantly. We are clothed in rags, the rags of an unchristian civilisation, and our faces are turned from our own homes. They are no longer our private castles.

Ever since the Earthquake of the war we have been forced to realise that privacy is impossible in our modern world. Our homes are built into the streets of the City of Destruction. Our children are not safe, and there is no power on earth can make them safe. The babes we bear are not ours, nor are their lives their own. The modern state can claim them and send them to death by torture.

* This might seem to contradict the Malthusian doctrine of the pressure of population upon subsistence, a doctrine which is as true to-day as ever it was. But the contradiction is apparent, not real. Cp. John Stuart Mill, "Political Economy," Book II, Chap. XIII.

"Poverty, like most social evils, exists because men follow their brute instincts without due consideration. But society is possible precisely because man is not necessarily a brute. Civilisation in every one of its aspects is a struggle against the animal instincts. Over some, even of the strongest of them, it has shown itself capable of acquiring abundant control. . . . If it has not brought the instinct of population under as much restraint as is needful, we must remember that it has never seriously tried."

That is the basic truth. Civilisation is impossible while man remains on the animal level, but he need not remain on that level, he can be redeemed, *i.e.*, his animal instincts can be sublimated and harmonised, and that is the task of true religion.

Wherever we go, the City will claim us, and suck us back into its streets again. There is only one way by which we can leave it, and that is the way of Death. If we live, we must live in the City which the great machine has built, whose walls are the walls of the world. And it is a City of Destruction; there hangs over it always the possibility of disaster. We have a burden upon our backs. Everywhere men stand and stagger unsteadily under the burden of debt, disease, bereavement, and loss of all that made life dear, which the Earthquake laid upon them. We have no book in our hands; but instead, we have a million newspapers, and these we frantically read. They show us clearly how parlous is the state in which we stand, but they point to no road out. If, as we read them, we do not weep or tremble, it is either because we cannot read aright, or because we have resigned ourselves to whatever comes, and made up our minds that we cannot help it. But many of the wisest amongst us do tremble; and not once nor twice but many times, in the last few months, have I heard men, not being able longer to contain, break out with that lamentable cry, "What shall I do?" I have heard it at Conferences on Unemployment, on Peace, and Education, good men and good women, who, seeing things as they are, look this way and that way as though they would run, and yet stand still, or sit still, listening with ill-concealed impatience to speeches, and manifestly crying within their souls, "What shall I do?" If there be some amongst us who have never cried that cry, it is not to their credit; it means that they are either soft in the head or hard in the heart, or both. Anyone who thinks and feels must be conscious of the desire to run—not run away, but run to help, to do something quickly—and there

are millions who are conscious of that desire, and yet stand still, "because, as I perceive, they cannot tell which way to go."

This City of Destruction in which we live, and with which our destinies are bound up, is an entirely modern creation. There has never been anything like it on the earth before. It is so entirely new that no one of us completely understands it; the wisest of us is liable to get lost in its maze of winding streets. We, its citizens, depend for our very existence upon a system so vast, so intricate, and complex that no single man can comprehend it as a whole, or foretell with any accuracy what will be the result of his own activities in it. One single fact stands out above all others. The City is built as a unity in itself. There is no longer any possibility of independence for any citizen, or group of citizens. This fact of material unity is the great modern fact, and on the way in which we face up to it our fate depends. There are many who see the fact clearly, and who realise that it demands response from us, and that quickly. But what response? We want to run, but cannot tell which way to go. To begin with, individuals seem so utterly helpless. We are bound hand and foot. Escape appears to be cowardly, even if it were possible; and yet the city is so vast, and its citizens so great a multitude, that it seems hopeless for any one person, or group of persons, to attempt to reform it.

The individual is lost in the mass, and by the movements of the mass is constantly compelled to do, and consent to the doing of, things which, to him as an individual, are disgusting and repulsive. He is obliged to look on helpless, while children are starved and women tortured, as the Russian women and children have been for the last two years. Moreover, the individual finds it hard to be sure of himself,

the great mass movement tends to sweep him off his feet, and destroy the balance of his mind. There is a kind of epidemic mass-madness which runs like the plague through our great populations, so that for awhile they are not responsible for their actions, and behave as though they were hypnotised. These epidemic panics, antagonisms, suspicions, elations and depressions, acting upon whole nations and groups of nations at a time, form the most deadly danger to which the modern world-city is exposed. Nor is the danger merely or mainly a material one. It is not only the danger of wholesale slaughter, and world-wide famine and want; it is the danger of real moral corruption. The great herd-passions know nothing of morality, and are essentially lawless, however much we may seek to rationalise and justify the suicidal actions into which they drive us. Temporarily, mob-madness appears to destroy real morality. Behind all our modern problems this peril threatens us, the destruction of the individual by the herd or mob. It is a danger all the more subtle and insidious because the process of destruction is largely unconscious. It is only the awakened soul that knows himself a citizen of the City of Destruction; the rest go on their way, supremely unconscious of corruption, doing what the mass does, thinking what the mass thinks, and not knowing why they think and act as they do. It is enough for them that "everybody is doing it," and they are convinced that anyone who does not conform is cracked, queer, or even wicked. They are not really persons at all, but puppets dancing to catchy tunes. There is always something disgusting about slavery, and this is the most pernicious form of it. No individual tyrant was ever so utterly without moral conscience, or so completely cruel, as the mob and the spirit of

the mob can be. I doubt if any human tyrant could have compelled men to do the things which have been done in Europe in the last decade. Freedom is life and slavery is death, and it is nothing less than freedom which is at stake. But how to preserve it, that is the crux.

The old Victorian individualism is impossible. You cannot get free *from* the City of Destruction. You may make a small fortune and retire to some pleasant place, buy a villa, and put up "No hawkers and no circulars" on the door, and there play at "independence"; but your whole life is a futile, silly lie. The more independent you seem, the more utterly dependent you are. You may have "an independence" and be free from the necessity of toil; but you might be rudely awakened. A great mass movement might scatter your fortune to the winds, destroy your home, rob you of all peace at one fell swoop, and send you out to stand stark naked in the teeth of a winter wind. Your fortune means that men, human like yourself, are working for you. If you do not sweat, someone sweats for you, and you are dependent on him. You do not know him and he doesn't know you, but you are bound to him as closely as you are to your wife, and you may find yourself unequal to the taming of that shrew. It is this awful fact of a material relationship, without any spiritual or moral meaning, which is the essence of our modern peril. The old conception of Freedom as independence has become, not only philosophically absurd, but practically impossible. Independence of the City does not exist except in the minds of the suddenly-rich, and they need a keeper. The whole life of the man who imagines himself independent is as much divorced from reality as the life of a lunatic, who believes himself to be God Almighty, or a poached

egg on toast. He is not only a lunatic, but a dangerous lunatic. Here, perhaps, is the root-cause of the trouble. The City of Destruction is largely built upon a false foundation, upon a belief in the possibility and supreme desirability of independence. The desire for independence and security through independence, is the basis of our life, political and private. The sovereign independence of nations, the leisured and independent classes, the superiority of independent persons, are dominant ideas with us, and they are all such stuff as dreams are made of. They have no real existence. This false idea of freedom dies hard, but it must die, and everything that is based upon it must die with it. The lust for this false freedom is at the bottom of the greed of gain, and haste to get rich quickly, which are the dominant characteristics of the City of Destruction. It is not a journalist, or a professional moralist, but an eminent and accurately trained scientist and doctor,* who writes, "Success in its most brutal" "form, which is monetary success, has become the" "exclusive object of universal endeavour. The col-" "lective ideal is the same as the individual ideal—" "to get rich as soon as possible by every available" "means. Admiration and respect are accorded to" "those who have succeeded financially. Fraudu-" "lent people frequently succeed because of their" "knowledge of mankind, especially because of their" "knowledge of its most common weakness, the" "desire to get rich quickly, without doing any work" "for it. . . . The desire to become rich destroys the" "capacity for happiness when riches are obtained;" "but there continues a ceaseless activity. The" "governing classes are no longer the higher classes," "and what remains of the old aristocracy is but"

* Dr. Hollander, "Psychology of Misconduct."

"little concerned in maintaining its intellectual"
"supremacy, or in constituting itself a social force,"
"and setting an effective example. The only effec-"
"tive aristocracy that remains is that of money;"
"and it cares for nothing save augmenting its wealth,"
"or spending it without intelligence!" If Dr. Hollander's indictment be true—and though some who hate to face unpleasant facts would plead that it was exaggerated—yet no honest person could blind himself to the truth it contains—if it be true, it is safe to assume that some primitive and powerful human instinct drives behind the hunt for riches; and that instinct appears to be the most deeply-seated and powerful of all—the instinct of freedom, the drive of the life-force itself, seeking room to grow and expand. Freedom regarded as room to grow is the basic necessity of life; men will do anything for it; and if they believe that it can be bought, there is no price that the strong man will not pay for it, and nothing that he will shrink from doing to secure the money with which to pay. Hence this mad scramble for wealth, for wealth means independence, and independence means freedom. Those who succeed in the scramble flaunt their false freedom in the faces of those who fail, and luxury at one end breeds bitterness at the other.

The air is full of Revolution. There are but few real Conservatives, few that is who are in any way content with the world as it is. Our modern Conservatives are not so much content with the world as it is, as terrified of the world as it may become. There is a general consent that things will and must change. We no longer think of the British Constitution as divinely inspired, and the system of free unfettered competition as God ordained. We have lost the robust untroubled stupidity of our fathers. We are not sure. Revolution is rainbow-

coloured, and takes a thousand different forms. Some men spell it with a capital R and sing "The Red Flag"; others with a capital E and sing "There's a long, long trail a-winding into the land of my dreams." The capital R's live in Whitechapel and the capital E's in Whitehall; but, whatever colour Revolution may take, all men feel that it must come and is coming. All men are Revolutionaries except perhaps the very extremist diehards, and they are not so much men as dignified memorials. No one is really reliable; our modern traffic in wild ideas has undermined the foundation of St. Paul's, and the Dean in desperation has taken to eugenics. His desperation does him credit, and his eugenics is the one thing that makes his general position on social questions in any way intelligible. It is the one constructive contribution that he has to make, or rather it would be that, if it could pass from the realm of purely academic discussion into the realm of practical policy. If it were to do so, it would involve the most tremendous and far-reaching revolution that has ever taken place in human society, a revolution that would go down to the very roots of human nature. Without desiring to prejudge an issue so momentous as that which is bound up with and in the eugenic ideal, and without in the least desiring to throw scorn upon the careful scientific exploration of that issue, one perceives that this or any other revolution is evidently impracticable and doomed to failure, so long as the false idea of freedom-as-independence remains dominant, with greed and selfishness to back it. The eugenic ideal would mean either a tyranny more iron and absolute than the world has ever known, or a strengthening of the social and spiritual forces unparalleled in history. Saints may breed eugenically of their own free will; slaves might do it by com-

pulsion; but there is no third option. That is the issue in all revolutions. Slavery, or the higher freedom, which is the utterly willing service of God and man. Merely material revolution of every sort is doomed to failure. Material revolutions are fatally complete; they literally revolve—that is, they go round to the point they started from, call it by a different name, and then proceed to do the trick again. They simply cannot do anything else; they are bound to move in vicious circles. Evil always does this. It is like a mad puppy, trying to live by biting its own tail. No revolution based upon the idea of independence of, or freedom from, the City of Destruction can possibly succeed, because it is based upon a lie; and no revolution which threatens or tends to destroy freedom can succeed, because Freedom is not a bourgeois bogey but a bed-rock reality of human life. You cannot obtain freedom from the City; you can only obtain freedom in and through it. You cannot destroy your relation to the mass, you can only put it right. The Freemen of the City are those who are in a right relation to it, not those who are, or pretend to be, independent of it.

But what is the right relation? What is the City of Destruction really? And what is our proper place in it? That is the riddle of the sphinx which we must either answer, and answer rightly, or die. Your response to that challenge is your religion. That is why religion is of supreme and paramount importance socially. It is the only way to freedom. It determines your relations to the whole of which you are a part, and that determination, for you and for the City, is a matter of life and death. The modern notion that you can escape the riddle, and that it doesn't matter how you answer, or whether you answer at all, is a perfectly ruinous lie. An individual

life which is lived without any conscious relation to life as a whole, is not a human life at all, it is not even animal, it is monstrous. Work which is work on a part, without any conscious relation to the whole, is not human work; it may be production, but it is not creation, and man was made to create. This sub-human kind of work destroys humanity, and it is characteristic of the modern City of Destruction. Everywhere men are at work of which they do not grasp the meaning or the purpose, and, in consequence, work becomes mere labour, and loses all its dignity. The results of this run like a rot through everything, blighting beauty, destroying joy. There is a widespread complaint to-day that men are not working, and the reason is not far to seek. It is the reason that was supplied unconsciously by the Sergeant, who charged a man with slackness and insubordination, and, on being asked for details of the accusation, said, "Well, Sir, this man's job is picking up odd bits of paper and orange peel about the camp, but 'is 'eart don't seem to be in 'is work like." Men are not working because their work is not human. Human work is work into which a man can put his heart, because it has a human purpose. Men only work at purposeless work in order to escape from it and indulge in equally purposeless play; and for them pleasure may be, but happiness never can be, a possibility. You cannot really be happy about anything unless you are happy about everything. In other words, there is no happiness for any persons or people who have not made their peace with God.

This making of your peace with God is not, and never can be, a mere matter of emotional surrender, however honest and sincere. It must be an act of the whole man, feeling, thinking, and doing, in every department of his life, in obedience to a great govern-

ing and controlling principle. It must be the response of the whole man to his whole world. God must be at least as big as the world if He is to be God at all. Religion applies either to everything or to nothing, and no department of life can be left outside of God. Whatever appears to be beyond His control must, to the religious man, become either a problem to solve or an obstacle to be overcome, and whatever is essentially opposed to Him must become an evil to be destroyed. The soul that has really made its peace with God simply cannot tolerate anything or anybody as being permanently outside of Him. It may perceive, but it cannot resign itself to, a division between the sacred and the secular. To talk of a secular side of life and a religious side of life is, to a person who has found God, to talk literal nonsense.

A religious department of life is a contradiction in terms, for the very essence of religion is that it is the relation of the living part to the living whole. Peace with God is the one absolute necessity of the fully human life: it is the plain bread which every soul must have in order to live. He may not be always conscious of his need. Bread is what every man needs, and no man thinks of wanting until he has to do without it. The soups and savouries come and go, but bread goes on for ever. The feast of life must have this solid foundation if it is to satisfy the soul of man, and not give him indigestion. Variety may be the spice of life, but it is not life itself. And it is that bread of life, that peace of God which is the very staff of life itself, for which men's souls are starving in these days.

Those of us who still believe in life, and have not taken to drugs in order to drown our craving for reality, desperately need some simple, solid, unshakable truth upon which we can rest secure. Not

that we seek to rest from labour or to rest from thought; on the contrary, we seek rest that we may labour, knowing that our labour is not vain—rest that we may think, knowing that our thought will lead us upward and onward into the heart of truth, not round and round in vicious circles of complicated falsehood.

Some there are indeed, who would have us believe that we can simply drift, and that God, or Adam Smith's "invisible hand" of enlightened self-interest, will guide us in time to the haven where we would be. But those of us who, in these last dreadful years, have been forced to face realities, who have walked in the vale of amazement and often rubbed elbows with death, we know in our bones that drifting can only end in deeper destruction. We know that trusting in Providence is in reality the opposite of fatalism, and that faith is the end of drift, because Providence is not an It, but a He, not a law nor a force, not even a principle, but a person; that trust in Providence is therefore a personal relationship. It means peace with God: it means response to a living leader's call: it is not passive but furiously active, it is not repose but adventure. Yet we must have repose that we may adventure; if we are to work, we must have the rest which means refreshment, recreation in the true sense of that word; we must find something or someone who will be to us a source of continually renewed vitality. It is this very vital need that we feel our religion should be able to satisfy. If there is any promise which Christ is honour bound to fulfil, it is the incomparably gracious one, "Come unto Me all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you; take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Whatever else fails or founders, the Church of Christ,

lifted out of the tides of time and set for ever upon the pinnacles of eternity, should be able to hold out great arms east and west and gather her children in, from the rising to the setting sun, that they may sit down and eat bread in the courts of the Kingdom of God. But, alas! that is where the Church appears to fail.

When Evangelist, pointing with his finger over the wide field of the world, shows to us the wicket-gate of the Church's teaching, and asks us if we see it plainly as the gateway into peace, thousands of us answer, as decidedly as Pilgrim answered, "No."

We take up our daily papers, and there, sandwiched in between the account of a national revolution and a society divorce, with a brutal murder above it and a squalid suicide beneath, we find the inevitable chatty paragraph or correspondent's letter about the Church's shaken creeds. Revolution seems to be affecting religion as well as everything else. "The Creeds are out of date," cry the Change-Alls, "they need revising, re-stating, re-interpreting, or abolishing altogether. Dogma is the devil, it's another name for death. Give us religion without relics, faith without fetters, Christ without Creeds."

"The Creeds are heaven-sent, divinely inspired, authoritative, word perfect expressions of Divine truth," say the Change-Nothings, "we alter them at our peril. Beware lest ye betray the faith once delivered to the Saints." And there, between the two main fires, stands the man in the street, and that increasingly rare bird, the man in the pew, bewildered, like Launcelot Gobbo between his conscience and the fiend. Budge, says the *English Churchman;* budge not, says the *Church Times,* don't even budge as far as Dr. Gore. Use your legs, take the start, run away from dead tradition, says the Modernist. Take heed,

do not run, scorn running with thy heels, says the Anglo-Catholic.

"Good Lord, what a business this religion is!" says the man in the street, "I wonder is there any-" "thing in it but talk? It seems to be all promise" "and no practice, like politics. They tell me that" "God has shaken, not only the earth, but the" "heavens as well. That's a cheerful prospect," "isn't it? I knew the old earth had been shaken" "till its back teeth rattled in its head, but they" "might have left me the heavens. I wanted to be" "sure of God. And what am I to teach my son?" "That's where the shoe pinches. I want him to" "be a good man. I want him to be better than" "his father. I want him to have a God and stick" "to Him—a man must have something to stick to;" "but what to tell him, beats me; it all seems to be" "on the wobble. I don't care so much about myself," "I don't matter so much, I'm fixed—pretty well" "fixed and finished—a man doesn't shift far after" "forty; but the boy's in the making, and the Lord" "knows where he'll get to if he flies off at a tangent." "One thing is certain, he shan't be a parson. There's" "precious little peace upon earth or goodwill among" "men, that I can see, and here are these parsons" "fighting one another like cats, over Creeds and" "Orders and goodness knows what, stuff that does" "not matter a ha'porth to anyone on earth, and" "less to anyone in heaven, I should think, if there" "is a heaven. And what with religion, and repara-" "tions, and income-tax, I am blest if I know where" "I am. And nobody else seems to know either."

It is a bad time for the man in the street. He is aware that he dwells in the City of Destruction. In many cases, he lost his son in the war to end war, which has not ended it; and in the unutterable

depths of his inarticulate soul there is trouble; and, not being able any longer to contain it, he breaks out with a lamentable cry, saying, What shall I do? The mother has never been quite the same since the war: she keeps on trying new religions, and she used to be a standby in religion. If he was a bit vague about his own notion of God, he could always rely on his wife's; but now that's gone shaky too. He does not know whether she will talk to him about his Oedipus complex, or his astral body, or tell him he has not got a body, but only thinks he has. She may tell him that every day and in every way he is growing better and better, but he does not see any signs of it, and his heart fails him for fear of what is coming upon the earth.

It has its comic side indeed, but underneath there is the most soul-tearing tragedy, the kind of misery that cannot take to tears. What is truth? O God, what is truth? Many a man has asked that question in these later years, not in cynic disbelief but in desperate and unutterable need. Many a man has asked it, not as the rhetorical flourish to easy agnosticism, but secretly, painfully, passionately, as he sat in silence with dead Billy's photograph on the mantelpiece, a demand-note for the rates on the table by his side, and a review on his knee containing a closely-reasoned article upon the shaken Creeds. And many a man has dumbly asked it, as he stood at some street corner, listening drearily to the verbal vinegar of a communist orator, with a demand for eviction in his pocket and a vacuum in his dinnerless inside.

We cannot see the wicket-gate, or walk in the narrow way of our forefathers; and to the ancient Evangelist who kindly points it out, we can only answer, No. But when he further says, "Do you see yonder shining light?" there are thousands who

would reply doubtfully, hesitatingly, and yet with a thrill of hope, I think I do. The light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness cannot swallow it up. The Christ still stands.

Let us then get this one thing clearly fixed in our minds at the start, that Christ is greater than any Creed, and cannot be comprehended by or expressed in any form of words that ever has been, or ever will be, drawn up. Theology is not religion, although there can be no religion without theology. Theology changes, but religion is unchangeable. Theology is the ever-dying body of a deathless soul, which is religion: it is the lamp in which man carries God's own unquenchable light. To call theology a science, in these days, is to use a very dangerous analogy, which leads us to expect at once too much and too little from it; because the word "science" has lost its generalised meaning of ordered knowledge of any sort, and, to most people, it means ordered knowledge of things that can be observed, measured, and weighed exactly, and the nature of which can therefore be expressed in adequate formulæ. This is the case with chemistry and physics, because they are material sciences dealing with material things; but it is never the case with theology, because it seeks to order and express, not material phenomena, but spiritual experiences, which cannot be observed, weighed, or measured exactly by any means known to the wit of man. There is no more prolific source of apparently insoluble problems, than this application to problems in one branch of knowledge, of methods and terms which are only applicable to another.

There cannot be any such thing as an exact science of theology. Theology is rather an art than a science. It cannot be exact and must be inspired. It is much more like poetry than like chemistry. The theologian,

like the poet, is for ever seeking to express the inexpressible. The epistles of St. Paul are intensely theological, but the endeavour to treat them as scientific is disastrous, and has led to the disaster of making them dull. St. Paul has much more in common with the poets than with the scientists; and so, if he rightly conceives his office, has every theologian.

When men seek in the Creeds exact and exhaustive scientific statements of ultimate truth, they seek what can never be found. There is no exact and exhaustive scientific expression of final truth, for the very good and sufficient reason that we do not know it, and never shall know it, until the earth is rolled up as a garment, and we all come to the measure of the fulness of the stature of Christ. There is a sense in which our Creeds have always been shaken and shaking Creeds, and, in the end, it is not man, but God that shakes them. Because the disputes of eminent divines are sometimes good copy, in these days, for a desperate journalist who has to earn his daily bread when there is a slump in the divorce courts—and because most men can read—the ordinary man hears to-day about the differences that exist among the doctors of the Law, and imagines that they are something new, and that these matters have never been disputed before, whereas in truth the learned men have been at it ever since Christ died. They have kept up a more or less continuous dispute for centuries, endeavouring, in every age, to batter out upon the anvil of argument the best terms in which to express the inexpressible truth as it is in Jesus.

They have been at it ever since St. Paul had that little difference with Apollos, and I expect they will go on into eternity. I shall be surprised if Dean Inge and Dr. Gore do not differ about the correct

theological expression of the Beatific Vision. But so long as they both see it they can differ to their hearts' content, and be all the better for it.

If, every time the doctors of divinity had differed about theology, the saints had wavered about religion, the Church would have been much more like a jelly than a rock, and the gates of hell would long ago have prevailed against her. The Christian saints do not contradict one another about religion because religion is unchanging and unchangeable; but doctors, and even saintly doctors, have always differed about theology, because that is changeable and always changing. If some third-rate journalist had gone round interviewing the early Christian fathers, he could have secured the most sensational copy for a primitive edition of "Painted Windows." It would have sold like hot cakes in the streets of Rome, and would have mattered as much as the effusion of the Gentleman with the Duster, *i.e.*, it would not have mattered at all.

What the man in the street wants to get at, is the plain bread of religion, the unchanging and unchangeable Christ, that, with a soul made strong by that refreshment, he may fling himself upon his work in a complex world: knowing what it means, knowing whence he comes and whither he goes, and what his world is for. And to give him that plain bread is the object of this book. If he does not obtain it here, he may at least be helped upon the way to where it can be found, which is ever the work of Evangelist.

What we are going to do is to follow this final direction. We are going to keep that light in our eyes—the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world—and go up directly thereto, believing that so we shall come unto the gate at which, when we knock, it shall be told us what we shall do.

II *Our Father*

We are seeking for the plain bread of religion which a man must have in order to live ; and we could not seek for it in a better place than in the Lord's Prayer. If the essence of Christianity is what all men, at all times and everywhere, have accepted as its sum and centre, the great Prayer would stand the test better than the great Creeds, firmly as I believe that the Creeds are implicit in the Prayer. It is impossible to pray the Lord's Prayer without being what men call "dogmatic." It is not a simple, easy prayer which anyone can say without committing himself to anything in particular ; you cannot really say it without committing yourself utterly to certain definite truths. It is cram-full of dogmas—every clause in it is a dogma.

The modern revolt against dogma is partly the result of shallow thinking, and partly the consequence of false dogmatism. There is dogmatism false and true, and false dogmatism is a vile thing. It belongs to the carnal mind which is at enmity with God. It has behind it nothing but a mixture of pride, fear, intellectual sloth, and the will to dominate others ; and it expresses itself in an attitude of harsh and unreasoning intolerance. It is a disgusting and repulsive thing, because it is rooted in sin—in common ordinary wickedness. It disguises itself as a strong-minded love of principle, and, in that guise, imposes upon many noble men, destroying their influence and

power for good, and leading them to behave more like drill-sergeants than pastors, and to treat their flocks as if they were platoons. It is, and always has been, the curse of Churches. It is to-day playing havoc with the work of some of the very best among the English clergy, and alienating the sympathies of thousands of the English laity. There is also a dogmatism common in the young, which is the outcome of a shallow, ill-founded enthusiasm, tinged with the self-importance of youth. This is very little more than a childish complaint like measles; but it is intensely irritating, because it is rooted in human folly, and only God and His Saints have really learned to suffer fools gladly.

But there is a dogmatism which expresses the most precious thing in the world, which is spiritual certainty; and that dogmatism is absolutely necessary to religion. It is beautiful, because it is rooted in honest love of God and man; it is fired by vivid and vital spiritual experience; it feeds upon constant prayer and communion with God, and it inevitably expresses itself in humble earnest work, and unconscious self-sacrifice, for the higher welfare of mankind. Its hall-mark is Humility. It is first of all pure, that is, rational, in the highest sense of the word, caring only for God and His Truth. It is then peaceable, knowing that Truth must speak for itself, and needs no support but its own manifestation. It is ever ready to hear and consider another man's point of view, and, taking it into the inner sanctuary of the soul, to lay it at the feet of Christ for His judgment upon it. It is patiently prepared to make allowances for human frailty, and entirely without tinge of contempt. Yet it is certain, unshakable, serene and humbly confident. This is the true dogmatism, the spiritual certainty, which is of the essence of religion.

Religion exists not to answer all questions, or to

clear up all mysteries; if that were its purpose, it could never be accomplished, for life grows, not less, but more mysterious as the intellect enters more fully into its truth. The stars were wonderful enough in all conscience, when we thought of them as lamps of light set in a solid sky to guide the sailors on their journey over the trackless sea; but they are a million times more wonderful, now that we know them to be blazing worlds, that move through the vast infinities of space in accordance with exact mathematical laws. Our own bodies were wonderful enough, when we thought of them as created in a moment by the fiat of the Almighty from the dust of the earth; but how much more wonderful they have become, since the sciences of physiology and embryology have taught us to trace their growth through countless stages, from the humblest kind of beginning to their present strangely complex end. Knowledge does not take from, it adds to, the wonder of the world. It is an infallible rule that, the more a man knows, the less he knows he knows. He knows that he knows nothing compared with what there is to know—that he is but a child playing on the shore of an infinite sea of truth, and picking up tiny pearls of wisdom that, by the grace of God, are cast up at his feet. Religion leaves a million questions unanswered and apparently unanswerable. Its purpose and object is not to make a man certain and cocksure about everything, but to make him certain about those things of which he must be certain if he is to live a human life at all. Religion does not relieve us from the duty of thought; it makes it possible for a man to begin thinking. It does not put an end to research and enquiry, it gives a basis from which real research is made possible and fruitful of results; a basis without which thinking only means wandering round in circles, and getting

nowhere in the end, and research means battering at a brass door that bruises our knuckles, and does not yield by the millionth part of an inch.

We must be certain about some things, before we can enquire about anything; and the first of these necessary certainties is the certainty of self. You say about something "I am as sure of this as I am of my own existence," but are you so sure of that? Descartes said that all doubt must end at the fact of his own existence, but in very truth that is where all the deepest doubt begins. Are you sure that you do exist in any real sense? Is there any settled, steady, reliable person that you can with confidence call "I"? Are you anything more than a stream of sensations? Some time ago a man sat in my office—a clever and cultured man who had reached a position of prominence in an honourable profession—and what he kept repeating over and over again to me was, "How could I have done it? How could I have done it?" Now, which was the man, the man who had done that deed, the man who sat there hating it—or the man who, as events proved, could do it again not long after? The truth about him was that, educated and cultured as he was, he was not in any real sense a person at all, he was still two or three "persons" which had not yet attained to any sort of unity. And is not his a common case? Search into yourself and see.

Often, as I sit and listen to the inner tragedies of life which are disclosed to me, I think of the comic story of Billy the Lizard. An explorer came back from abroad to his country house, with a chameleon which took the colour of whatever material you placed it upon. He displayed it with pride to the members of his household, and then went away, leaving it in charge of the butler who had affectionately named it "Billy the Lizard." After a time he returned, and

his first question was, "Well, John, and how is the Lizard?" The butler looked serious and downcast, and said: "Well, you see, Sir, it was this way. We had a few of the villagers up to look at him, and we put him on some red flannel and he turned red all right; and then we put him on some green baize, and he turned as green as Ireland; and then some silly ass put him on a patchwork quilt,—and poor old Billy bust." There are many of us who are nothing but "poor old Billies" bursting and bust. The world we live in is a patchwork quilt, a bewilderingly complex patchwork quilt, patched with all the colours of the rainbow, and we madly try to adapt ourselves to its complexities. We are as children tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, and by the cunning craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, not so much men, indeed, as incarnate moods, more unreliable than English weather. We change our characters according to the company we keep. We pride ourselves upon our sanity, merely because we never fail to be bitten by the fashionable craze. We don't know where we are or whither we are going. We don't know what we want, and won't be happy till we get it. And while we remain in this state, living, and thought about life, are, in any real sense of those terms, perfectly impossible. We lightly assume that we are rational beings; but it is an assumption that, for many of us, has no justification whatsoever. We are not born rational; far from it, we are born reasoning, which is a very different thing. The value of reason depends entirely upon its basis, and it may be, and often is, based upon nothing but passion, prejudice, and a whole series of unexamined delusions; and in that case reason moves like a drunken man who goes round and round a lamp-post, mistaking its crowning flame for the lights of

home. It is commonly stated that men act upon reason and women act upon impulse; whereas the truth is that men act upon impulse and find a reason for it afterwards, and women act upon impulse and don't bother about the reason at all.

We must always remember that there is no such thing as pure reason. To begin with, you cannot separate intellect either from emotion or from instinct; and to go on with—which is more important—you cannot divorce the conscious from the unconscious mind; and, as we dig deeper into the mystery of the mind, it becomes more and more evident that it is like an iceberg, two-thirds of it are underneath, underneath the conscious level, and upon the health of that buried part depends the balance and vigour of the whole. By far the most important part of an argument consists of the evidence upon which it is based; and the kind of evidence which we select to argue from, out of the mass that is being continually submitted to us, the kind of fact that we tend to remark and remember, and the kind of fact that we tend to forget, is unconsciously determined for us by the kind of person that we really are. The assumptions from which we argue are built up out of the things to which we attend; and the things to which we attend, always a limited selection out of the innumerable things which claim our attention, are mainly determined by our character, by what we actually are. And so, the first absolutely necessary certainty is the certainty of self; and there is no way by which you can come to the certainty of self, to the certainty of what you are, by which you can come to anything like internal unity, by the exercise of reason alone. No amount of knowledge, no great weight of learning, can deliver you ultimately from the necessity of making an act of Faith. You must set up a hypothesis and

then test it—that is the only way in which you can get at anything. It has been said there is no science until there is a hypothesis on its trial, and that is true of science and of life too. The method by which Newton came to the law of gravity is the method by which we must all come to the law of Life. We must make our great guess, set up our grand hypothesis, and then test and verify it by living as though it were true. There is no other way. With our great guess for a guiding star, we must go exploring in our world of space and time, groping in the dark, and finding oft the pathways blocked on every side; until at last, as we follow faithfully, a *mystic certainty* arises like the sun, drives all the mists away, and shows in front of us the radiant, living mountains of God's Truth. And of the great certainties which must be sought and found this way, the certainty of self comes first, for without it there can be no certainty of anything whatsoever.

Herein lies the rock upon which all our dreams of a better social order, all our dreams of peace upon earth and goodwill toward men, come to shipwreck. You cannot make peace among people who are at war within themselves. There can be no peace except to men of goodwill, and the difficulty is to be sure of a will at all, never mind a good one. We assume that we have a will, as we assume that we have a self, and we say "I have a will of my own," but have you? Never, until you have a God of your own. The battle between the will and a desire is, at its root, a battle between two desires or more, and the dominant desire wins. But while we have no one dominant desire, or while we have widely different and conflicting desires which dominate us by turns, there is no peace, no possibility of peace without or within. There is no peace for those who have not got in some measure to

the certainty of self; and in order to secure that, we must have our dogma, our great hypothesis by which we live, and which we verify by living. And here it is that Christianity comes in with the great Prayer "Our Father." *Lex orandi lex vivendi*—the law of Prayer is the law of life. There is the great hypothesis. "Now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know" (therein is the mystic certainty) "that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." That is the great hypothesis—that is the truth about me—and to that truth I must cling. I am the Son of God revealed in Jesus Christ. Whatever I think, or feel, or do, which is not consistent with that fact, is not true; it is not I; it can lead me nowhere and gain me nothing. However many are the gifts I may be offered they are all shams, lies, and delusions apart from Christ's likeness, and will turn to dust in my hands. That is the truth, the final, absolute, and ultimate truth about me. It is a dogma, and an intolerant dogma in a sense, as all dogmas are. It does not permit of compromise. If I am the son of God revealed in Jesus Christ, I am not just a little better than the beast, I am a little lower than the angels; and made so only that I may be crowned with glory and honour. Every kind of thought or action based upon the belief that I am anything less than this, an immortal soul made in the image of God—any idea that my life is limited like the life of the animals, or controlled as theirs is controlled—is a tissue of falsehood, and all action based upon that falsehood can only issue in disaster. If I am the son of God, nothing but God will satisfy my soul; no amount of comfort, no amount of ease, no amount of pleasure, will give me peace or rest. If I had the full cup of all the world's joys held up to me, and could drain it to the

dregs, I should still remain thirsty if I had not God. If the feast of all the good things of life, pleasures and powers that have been and that are, could be laid out before me and I could eat it all at one meal, I should still be hungry if I had not God. Nor would it satisfy my soul, if I could be assured of an infinite extension of this present life at its best, apart from God. If the feast of this life's goods could last for ever, yet would I start up from the table satiated but still unsatisfied, because I had not God. There is not enough in ten material worlds to satisfy a fully-developed human soul—I must have communion with God. Whatever tends to break that communion is an enemy of mine, however much it may pretend to be a friend. However stubbornly I may stick to the delusion that I can live without Him, however closely I may cling to the idol that I put up in His place, sooner or later, in this world or in the next, the idols and delusions will have to go. There are not in reality two worlds or two lives, there is but one; and that is life eternal, which is to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. That is the first great dogma; and the certainty of its truth which comes by living on it, never by reasoning about it, is the first dogmatic certainty which I must have if I am to live, in the true sense of that word. This is the first slice of Plain Bread which Jesus gives to me—I am the son of God, and am destined to wake up in His Likeness and to be satisfied with it.

The first slice is that by which we come to certainty of self; and the second is like unto it, and by it we come to certainty of other-self. Complete uncertainty about other-self makes life in the world impossible, and thought about it impossible. From the very beginning I find myself surrounded by the mystery of other-selves; they press upon me on

every side, from the time when I first look up into my Mother's face, to the time when I lie down at last alone to die—and yet not alone, for I only relinquish my hold on the hand of the one I leave behind, to grasp the hand of the Other I go to meet. If I am to live, I must be in a measure certain about other-selves.

Next to the uncertainty of self, the most common cause of tragedy in life is the uncertainty about other-self, the uncertainty of what lies behind the eyes into which I am always looking, of what is going on behind the mask of the myriad human faces that surround me everywhere. Often, from the very beginning, tragedy dogs our steps. A child instinctively stretches out its hand in trust and love to the first other-self it meets, which is its Mother; and then later grows to find that trust and love betrayed, grows to find that its first guess was apparently wrong, and that behind the mask of a smiling face there was, not a friend, but an enemy. And in that trust betrayed, there is symbolised and summed-up the bitterness of human life apart from God. Life is not life at all until a man or woman has attained to two certainties—certainty of self and certainty of at least one other-self in the world. It is not only not good, it is not possible, for man to live alone. There is no mystery like the mystery of a crowd; and, the more one knows, the more mysterious it becomes. Again and again I have stood before a crowd of what the enemies of the Church would call with a sneer "dull respectable people," and have been tempted to think of them as "dull" and "respectable," but not for long. Knowledge soon comes, and proves that they are neither as dull nor as respectable as they seem; a frank and public confession of their secret hopes, longings, and memories, would supply copy for the Sunday press for a twelve-month, and provide passages which might

well appear in the biographies of the world's heroes and saints. Through all that was written, there would run, and run richly, the veins of tragedy and comedy, of splendour and of squalor, of glory and of shame, which go to make up human life ; and one of the commonest cries that would rise from the heart of the crowd would be "It was not mine enemy that did me this dishonour, for then peradventure I would have hid myself from him ; but it was even thou, my companion and mine own familiar friend ; we took sweet counsel together and walked in the House of God as friends, and yet it was thy hand which struck me in the dark, and the wound remains still bleeding and unbound.''

That is the cry of any husband to any wife, of any friend to any friend—the uncertainty of other-self. The need is desperate and imperative, and once again the Prayer comes to us in our hour of need, with its great hypothesis, "Our Father." First of all, there is One other-self of which we can be sure, one other-self upon whom we can rely and from whose Love we never can escape—there is God. I am alone and yet not alone, because the Father is with me. It can become for us a spiritual certainty, the Love of God. "I *know* that neither length, nor breadth, nor depth, nor height, nor any other creature can separate me from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus." God's answer to the cry of humanity for a comrade and a friend is the gift of Himself. But there is more than that. He not only gives us Himself, He gives us brothers. He bids me set up as my second great hypothesis, that all these other-selves, that press around me everywhere, are my brethren. Whatever in their conduct or character seems to contradict that, is not the real truth about them. Whatever they may do or say, they are still the sons of God and brethren of mine ; and if I think or act

towards them on any other understanding than that, the action will be, in itself, a falsehood, and will lead me nowhere, and gain me nothing. I shall certainly come up against facts—apparently the hardest of hard facts—which go to contradict this hypothesis. I shall be disappointed, disillusioned, again and again, and yet the closer I cling to that faith, and the more I defy fear and self-pity in its name—the more utterly I refuse to compromise with any other hypothesis—the stronger will become the certainty of its final truth. Apart from the hypothesis, there is no chance of certainty about other-self whatsoever. No amount of worldly wisdom, no amount of experience, no great weight of learning, no observation in the world, however close, will ever yield us the certainty of other-self upon which we can act with vigour, and suffer with joy and gladness, and so come to a real knowledge of the world as it actually is at heart. It is impossible to verify the hypothesis without suffering for it, that is why most of us never do verify it. We are afraid to suffer, we do not dare to Love, and so we never come into touch with reality at all, but pass our time in a world of conventional make-believe. No man can believe in the Brotherhood of man and be comfortable, it is a creed that takes away all our cushions and leaves us with a cross. But it is the only way to life. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the Brethren. We do not live, unless we live in and through the beloved community. That then is the second slice of Plain Bread, the Brotherhood of Man, the second great necessary certainty.

The third great certainty is the certainty of Nature. From the very beginning I find myself conscious of another reality set over against myself,

the reality of what I see and hear and touch, and from the beginning there is an uncertainty about it. It is true that I have my senses to go by, but experience goes to prove that I cannot trust them. The man to whom seeing is believing lives in an unreal world. To him the earth is flat, the sun goes daily round it, and sinks into the sea, the stars are tiny points of light set in a dome of sky, and matter is a solid and unchanging thing—and that is a world of dreams. Moreover, my senses do not and cannot tell me anything about what it means to me, this other reality; they can observe but they cannot interpret it; they cannot tell me whether it is friend or foe, and if I trust them to decide they will deceive me. And yet I must be certain of what this other reality means to me and to mankind: I must decide whether I am to treat it as a friend or a foe—an immense amount depends upon that.

Here once again reason unaided will not help me, I must make a great venture, an act of faith, I must set up a hypothesis and live by it; I must assume either that it is a friend or a foe, and test it as such. At first man assumed that it was a foe, nor can we wonder at this when we think of the first man in the real Garden of Eden, which, as science shows us, was no ready-made paradise. There he lived in the trackless jungle or tropical forest, swept by the rushing mighty winds, drenched by torrential rains, parched by the rays of the burning sun. When one thinks of him standing and looking up at the everlasting hills that rose in snow-clad mystery against the sky, tossed about in his little boat on the waves of a stormy sea, cowering in his darkening cave, while the lightning tore the clouds asunder, and the whole world shook at the voice of the Gods; with evidence all around him of powers so much greater than himself, small

wonder that his first instinct was that of terror, and that he tended to people the unseen world with a thousand gods, who, if they were not his enemies, were but capricious and fickle friends. But the hypothesis of fear is unfruitful, out of terror nothing comes. It is sometimes said that, in contrast to this original attitude of fear, man has arisen in his might and conquered Nature. We talk glibly about subduing the powers of the material world, but we have not subdued, and cannot subdue, them, we have merely made friends with them. We have, as it were, stretched out our hands to the stars above us and the stones beneath our feet and cried "Our Father." We have assumed that at the heart of Nature there is reason like our own; we have looked for mathematical order in the movement of the stars and have found it; we have searched for method in the growth of life and have discovered it; we have hushed the wrangling of our fears, our passion, and our pride, and have trustfully bent our ears to the lips of the earth and sky, and listened intently to the song they sing, and, on the whole, it is true that the more clearly audible that song becomes, the more certain we grow that it is the song of a friend, a reasonable and reliable friend. As scientific learning advances it goes to establish, more and more firmly beyond the possibility of doubt, the great hypothesis or guess upon which it is based, that at its heart the external world is reasonable, reliable, and friendly. As we make friends with it, our powers over it grow, and it showers gifts upon us with a prodigal generosity of which, we feel, we are only just at the beginning.

The newly discovered order of Nature is infinitely precious to the religious man, revealing, as it does, the faithfulness of God with Whom there is no variableness nor shadow cast by His turning. Nevertheless,

it is impossible to hold this faith unless we hold it in the teeth of doubt, and there are many still who say "Who will show us any good?" If we have discovered order and reliability in Nature, we have also discovered, and continue to discover in it, fresh visions of chaos, cruelty, and apparently purposeless waste. We have had laid bare before us the vision of "Nature red in tooth and claw" and the "struggle for existence," and we must face facts. But if we do, let us be sure that they are facts we face. Nature "red in tooth and claw" is, not so much fact, as interpretation of fact. A friendly critic of this book, read in proof, reminds me of the "incredible cruelties which modern research reveals," and takes as a single instance the mussel beds of the Wash. "I don't know what the mussels live on," he says, "some small sea organism or other anyhow which cannot enjoy being eaten. The star-fish comes along, carefully provided with the means of *cruelly* forcing open and devouring the mussel. The sea-gull comes along, provided with the means of *cruelly* tearing up and devouring the star-fish. What happens to the sea-gull is another story. . . . But does this argue love to the destroyed one? It is all very well to dissemble your love—but why? From this standpoint, *which might be indefinitely multiplied*, every living thing is in a sense a parasite upon some other living thing."

This very typical criticism consists, not merely in a description of fact, but in an interpretation of it, the interpretation being not so much stated as suggested—especially by the insertion of the word "*cruelly*." The facts are indisputable. The whole order of Nature is that living things live on other living things, every living thing is in a sense a parasite upon some other living thing, there is no getting round that fact, and if it must be interpreted as cruelty, then the

whole Christian Creed falls to the ground in ruins. But must it be so interpreted ? Cruelty is the infliction on a living creature of *unnecessary* pain by a being who delights in pain. Do we find cruelty in the fact ? To begin with, to talk about a mussel or a star-fish, or for the matter of that a sea-gull, suffering pain, in anything like our sense of the word, is not to state facts but to make great and unfounded assumptions. *They simply have not got the wherewithal to suffer it.* I think every competent scientist would be with me in warning people against this kind of sentimentalism, which makes mussels and star-fish feel like men and women. As a doctor friend of mine remarked the other day, pain is an extremely relative business even among men, and what is agony to a sensitive and delicately nurtured woman is mere inconvenience to a buck navvy or a black, and, in the same way, what, to a buck navvy, would be agony, may be presumed to be uncomfortable tickling to a mussel or a star-fish.

The people who are most intensely troubled about the cruelty of Nature are, for the most part, extremely sensitive people, who read their own sensitiveness into every living thing. But when God brings His creatures to that pitch of sensitiveness to pain, He provides them with the means of turning pain into peace and joy by making it a sacrifice to Love. Men and women find the most exquisite pleasure in enduring pain for the sake of a glorious purpose or a beloved friend. The Sacrifice, which in the animals is unconscious, becomes conscious in man, and, with the power of conscious sacrifice, comes the power to interpret pain, and by the alchemy of Love transform it into glory. The animals cannot offer conscious sacrifice, but neither can they suffer as men can, or, at any rate, it seems unlikely that they can, for the truth is, that we know nothing whatsoever about the feelings of a mussel at

the moment when it is eaten by a star-fish, or those of a rabbit worried by a stoat, nor can we enter into the mind of a mouse when it is being played with by a cat, but it seems probable that they are anæsthetised to a great extent. Even in human War one has seen a man with a wound which would have caused him under normal circumstances tremendous agony, shouting with joy because he had got a "blighty," interpreting pain as pleasure. There are natural anæsthetics, like excitement or fear, and though we do not know, we have good grounds for guessing, that Nature has many ways of alleviating agony. Nature is not as red either in tooth or claw as she is painted. "The struggle for existence" is also not so much a fact as an interpretation of fact—an interpretation which is very doubtfully true. It reads into the process of evolution the agony of human warfare, with its accompaniments of callousness, cruelty and degradation. But although the sparrow falls it is not certain that it falls without the knowledge of the Father, and that its falling is not falling on to sleep and peace. The dead bird is a pitiful sight, and it is right that it should stir us to pity, but may it not be that we pity it because He first pitied us and the bird alike ?

The whole question sums itself up in this: Can we, who know so much more than the early Christians did about the process of Nature, still maintain the Christian interpretation of the process as meaning the Fatherhood of God ? Can we still cry "Our Father" and maintain that Christ is the "logos" or meaning of the natural world, and that through Him all things were made and without Him was nothing made that was made ? I believe we can. But mind you, if we cry "Our Father," it is to the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ we cry, the Father Who was revealed in Him, and in that revelation the mystery of the Cross

is central. Christ reveals the meaning of the world as Sacrifice. Never did He more clearly reveal the Father than when He hung there broken, battered and bleeding, between the earth and sky. The Father Whom we worship is revealed in Christ crucified as well as in Christ risen, and Christ ascending, and in that revelation there is no sign of what I call, for lack of a better term, "easy omnipotence." Neither creation nor redemption is revealed as being accomplished by a turn of the eye or a wave of the hand, and, as we shall see later, the shadow of the Cross falls over Nature, and bids us see in it, not man tortured by God, but God suffering with, in, and for man, that He may bring him to glory.

The Christian interpretation of evolution is that it is *an ascension through sacrifice to perfection, and, in that sacrifice, all creatures join, from the protoplasmic jelly-fish to the Man, Christ Jesus.* The true parasite is the living thing which eats but is not eaten, which gets but does not give, and is in Nature, comparatively rare, and tends to become rarer. Sensitive men and women shrink from saying or thinking that animals have less than a human capacity for feeling pain because they fear it will lead to cruelty, which they rightly regard as the most abominable of all sins. But Christianity has its own weapon wherewith to combat cruelty, it bids us fight it with the sword of gratitude. Inasmuch as we must accept the sacrifice of the animals in order to live, it bids us receive that sacrifice as a sacrament, with reverence, and with a thankful heart, and bids us love the animals, and indeed if we do not we cannot love the Christ. Cruelty to animals means that in a Sacramental universe we eat and drink the universal sacrifice without discerning the Lord's Body, and therefore eat and drink damnation to ourselves. Christianity and

cruelty to animals cannot really co-exist any more than love and hatred, fire and water.

The shadow of the Cross is there, and though we must beware lest we exaggerate its darkness by mistaking fiction for fact, yet there remain dark facts to be faced, which make it necessary that, if we hold the faith of Our Father, we hold it in spite of doubts.* Nevertheless the faith can and must be held. The supposition that at the heart of all things there is a friend, and a reliable friend, has proved to be so fruitful of real results, that we must not be shaken from it by apparently cruel contradictions, but must seek to enter more fully into truth, and find out how far, as a matter of fact, cruelty and waste are part of Nature's very self and how far they are a part of Nature as we, in our ignorance of the great end God seeks to achieve, and in our state of rebellion against His laws, imagine her to be.

Every child has two fathers, the father as he is in himself, and the father as the child in his ignorance

* Since these words were written there has come upon us the staggering disaster of the earthquake in Japan. It is a black fact which must be faced. Our Fathers felt less troubled because they saw these terrible disasters as revelations of the Power of a just and angry God. For us that is impossible. God is like Jesus. The only attitude Jesus could take to such a horror is to suffer in and for it, and inspire men and women to rise triumphant and unbroken out of it. In this way we believe God Himself is morally related to this convulsion of nature, it is part of the Cross of Creation, in it God suffers with and for man that He may bring him to glory, and through it He calls us to share His suffering by willing sacrifice. What the world does now for Japan may sow the seeds of an international friendship which may one day flower into real Peace. I do not mean that it was sent for that purpose. I do not think it was sent for any purpose. It is evil, and therefore irrational, but by the grace of God, it can be made to serve the purpose of His Everlasting Love.

conceives him to be, and, if the child have a good father, his growth depends upon his trust in him that he is a friend, even when he appears to be a foe, for without that trust he cannot attain to the fulness of loving communion. So it is with us and God. "Our Father" is the beginning and the end of science, as it is the beginning and the end of life, for the beginning of science is the supposition that the world is in reality a rational world, and the end of science is to understand, and so hold communion with that rational reality. The beginning of life is the supposition that God is Love, and the end of life is to comprehend, with all the Saints, what is the length, and breadth, and depth, and height, of that Love which passes knowledge. So science and religion meet and in the end are one, and even through the thunder comes a human voice saying :—

> O heart I made a Heart beats here for thee,
> Face My hands fashioned see it in Myself,
> Thou hast no power nor canst conceive of Mine,
> But Love I gave thee with Myself to love
> And thou must love Me, Who have died for thee.

The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain, and, apart from Him, it is a groaning and travailing in the dark, but God Who commanded the light to shine out of the darkness has shined into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and in that light I can look into Nature's darkest horror chambers, and see there, at the very worst, a Cross, the universal Sacrifice, and behind the Cross an empty tomb, and a figure with hands outstretched to bless ascending into glory. I see Christ's cross in Nature's sorrow, and His glory in her joy, and can in Him lift up my heart in gratitude upon a summer day. This is the third slice of Plain Bread, the third great certainty,

which provides the necessary mystic basis of human knowledge and human life.

There are cowslips in the clearing,
  With God's green and gold ablaze,
And the distant hills are nearing,
  Thro' a sun-kissed sea of haze.

There's a lilt of sudden laughter,
  In the brook upon its way,
With the sunbeams stumbling after,
  Like the children at their play.

There's a distant cuckoo calling,
  To the lark up in the sky,
As his song comes—falling—falling
  To his nest, a happy sigh.

Sursum Corda ! How the song swells,
  From the woods that smile and nod.
Sursum Corda ! Ring the bluebells,
  Lift ye up your hearts to God.

The fourth and last certainty is the certainty of Death. Of all things in the world it is in a sense the one thing of which we can be sure. We may try to forget it, but it will not forget us. Nor can we ever really forget it, until we have faced it and come to a decision about it. In the midst of life we are in death, unless we know that in the midst of death we are in life. In the midst of life we are in death, its shadow falls over everything.

'Twere heaven enough to fill my heart
  If only one would stay,
Just one of all the million joys
  God gives to take away.

If I could keep one golden dawn,
  The splendour of one star,
One silver glint of yon bird's wing
  That flashes from afar ;

If I could keep the least of things
  That make me catch my breath
To gasp with wonder at God's world
  And hold it back from death,

It were enough ; but death forbids.
  The sunset flames to fade,
The velvet petals of this rose
  Fall withered—brown—decayed.

O Grave, where is Thy victory ?
  O Death, where is Thy sting ?
Thy victory is ev'rywhere,
  Thy sting's in ev'rything.

There is a stage in a small child's life, when one of its greatest joys is to be taken up by its father and swung in the air, and I can see now my own small son standing before me when I have just put him down, and saying, with shining eyes, " Do it again Daddy, do it again." And in him I see a picture of the whole world of men and women standing before the great All Father Who makes the sunset and the rose, and crying as they fade and fail, " Do it again Daddy, do it again "—always trying to recapture the ecstasy, and never quite succeeding. There is only one way by which we can ever capture, and hold fast for ever the joys that come and go, that is by capturing and holding fast the Father Himself from Whom they come. Always we must stand in a world of dying things and dying people crying out through our tears, " Do it again Daddy, do it again," until the moment comes when the Father reaches down, snatches us to His heart, and holds us there for ever.

The more we grow in the love of Beauty, Truth and Goodness, the more completely human we become, the more intense must grow our hunger for immortality and our abhorrence of death. The idea that belief in immortality is an ancient doctrine fast

losing ground is an exact reversing of the facts, it is a comparatively modern doctrine which the growth of human personality, and its firmer hold on a wider world make inevitable. It is the man in his infancy who cries: "How good is man's life, the mere living, how fit to employ all the heart, and the soul, and the senses for ever in joy." It is the man in the fulness of his manhood who cries: Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and what is there upon the earth that I desire in comparison with Thee? And that experience of being caught up in the arms of the Father is one of the fundamental religious experiences. Saints of all sorts, from St. Paul to the bright-eyed wholesome Salvation Lassie, have felt, and expressed in widely different ways, the same joy. Faith in immortality is, and must be, the logical conclusion—using logic in its fullest human sense—of the instinct of self-preservation. As man grows, so grows his divine discontent, that discontent which severs him completely from the rest of the animal creation, and bids him reach out to fuller and fuller life. And there is in him an instinct to preserve that life. He can find endless reasons to justify the instinctive craving, but it is the instinct that sets him reasoning, and, unless the world is a fraud, that instinct points to something real by which it can be satisfied.

> I cannot chain my soul: it will not rest
> In its clay prison, this most narrow sphere:
> It has strange impulse, tendency, desire,
> Which nowise I account for nor explain,
> But cannot stifle, being bound to trust
> All feelings equally, to hear all sides:
> How can my life indulge them? yet they live
> Referring to some state of life unknown.

The shadowy hosts whom Virgil pictured in the underworld like autumn leaves in the Vale of Vallambrosa, crowding by the river bank, and stretching

out their hands in longing for the farther shore, held out their hands backward to the life that they had left, not forward to the life which was to come. But, as man grows, the hands turn round and are stretched out forwards to the future, not back to the past. We become conscious that the most perfect things in life like Love, Beauty and Truth, fall short of perfection. And yet, God has given so much, can we believe that He will not give more ?

From the purely intellectual point of view there are many sound philosophical arguments for immortality, and even from the scientific standpoint, it is difficult to dismiss as negligible the evidence which in these latter years has accumulated for the survival of the human personality after death. The value of the evidence is indeed difficult to estimate ; we have to allow for fraud, self-deception and ignorance, yet it is impossible to ignore the possibility to which so much of it points. But certainty about death only comes with certainty about God and His Love. We can never reach the point of victory and triumph over death until we reach the heart of the Father in Jesus Christ, and it is that triumphant certainty that we need, and need, not for the future only, but for the present. We cannot live this life aright unless we see it in its true perspective, see it as the foreground of eternity. Apart from that we tend to see all things in a wrong proportion ; big things become little, and little things big, and we labour for that which is not Beauty, and strive for that which is not Bread. There is no peace for man as long as he lives in the Valley of the Shadow of Death. It is only the tender mercy of Our God whereby the Day-spring from on high can visit us to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, only through His tender mercy that our human feet

can be guided into the paths of peace. Apart from this triumphant certainty life becomes vulgar and sordid. When the shadow of death falls over all the beauty of the world, the hunger for life in man is so strong that it tends to brutalise him, and drives him to grasp at everything he can get, without caring how he gets it. "His selfishness is satiated not, it wears him like a flame; his hunger for all pleasure howsoe'er minute grows pain," and life tends to become a struggle of swine about a swill trough—a struggle in which there is no tenderness and no mercy. Unless, then, life mocks man and has no meaning, the instinct of self-preservation must have its perfect work and must lead to Truth, not falsehood. The Christian hypothesis is that life is as good as God revealed in Christ, and that behind the Cross there is ever and always the resurrection. And it is only by taking that hypothesis, and living life as though it were true, flinging ourselves upon it recklessly in the faith that God keeps the good wine until the last, that we can come to that triumphant certainty which destroys death, and makes us sure that in the midst of death we are in the Life Everlasting.

> If it be all for nought, for nothingness
> At last, why does God make the world so fair?
> Why spill this golden splendour out across
> The western hills, and light the silver lamps
> Of Eve? Why give me eyes to see, and soul
> To love so poignantly that, like a pain,
> This beauty stabs me through, and wakes within
> Rebellious voices crying against death?
> Why set this hunger for eternity
> To gnaw my heart-strings through, if death ends all?
> If death be death, then evil must be good,
> Wrong must be right and beauty ugliness.
> God is a Judas who betrays His friend,
> And with a kiss damns all the world to hell,
> If Christ came not again; for was not Christ

God's kiss upon man's lips ? A traitor's kiss,
Luring him on to vanity, vain hope,
Vain faith, and vanity of vanities,
Vain Love, if death be death indeed, and life
Rots in the grave ? Truth is not Love but Hate,
Malicious cruelty, foul fiendish spite
Without the empty tomb. Curse God and die.
But I go laughing in my heart, I know
There is no death, 'tis but a phantom fear
That haunts the soul apart from God. Christ rose.
The stone was rolled away, and echoing
His voice startled Death's sentry guards. "Behold,
I live for ever and have cast the keys
Of Hell into the bottomless abyss."
Lift up your heads ye golden gates, for all
To enter in who will to walk the way.
Christ lives, and round the living Christ new worlds
Burn to their birth in light, new triumph songs
Make music mid the silent stars and swell
Like ocean's thunder on a sounding shore.
Life ! Life ! More Life ! Christ Lives for Evermore.

That is the fourth slice of Plain Bread, Victory over death.

III *Which art in Heaven*

We have seen that the purpose and object of religion is not to answer all questions and clear up all mysteries; it is not to put an end to thought and enquiry, or to the great adventure of life, but to give us a basis upon which thought, enquiry, and adventure can be fruitful of real results. It is to make us certain of those things of which we must be certain if we are to live in any real sense at all.

The first of these certainties is the certainty of self. Until a man is in a measure certain of what he is, and whither he goes, he cannot really be said to have been born as a man. No man is really born until he is born again and can say, "I am a son of God." Moreover, as I must live my life surrounded by other selves, and cannot, without mutilating or destroying myself, sever my relationship with other selves—before I can be said to live in any real sense, I must have a measure of certainty as to what the truth of that relationship is, of what they are to me and I to them; so must I come to the knowledge, not merely of the Fatherhood of God, but of the Brotherhood of man, before I begin my real life. Further still, the environment in which I live, and must live, consists, not only of other selves, other lives apparently very much like my own, but of myriads of other lives evidently very different from my own; ranging from the life of my dog to the life of the flea on his back, and the mysterious life of what we call inanimate things.

That flea is a terror. He constitutes a theological problem in himself—the problem of the real parasite, which may take the form of a flea or of a dishonest financier. It is hard to see any purpose in his life, except as a thorn to the flesh. I hesitate to say about him that he is wholly evil, for I do not want to slander either fleas or financiers, however dishonest; and yet I never really doubt that my right relationship to both of them is to endeavour to get rid of them as quickly as possible—any more than I doubt that such is my right relationship to a cobra, a tapeworm, or a rattlesnake. So for all practical purposes, they are evil. All parasites are an abomination unto the Lord. That is settled. I find nothing in my conscience which bids me cultivate friendship with, or even tolerate, vermin. The flea and his kindred are the exception which proves the rule of my right relationship to Nature. I must live on some sort of terms with the mountains and the hills, with animals and flowers, with what we call the powers of Nature; and until I am in a measure certain of my right relationship with these, life can never be life indeed. We have seen that the Christian religion bids us stretch out our hands to them in an attitude of fearless faith, and cry, "Our Father."

> Not here for high and holy things
> We render thanks to Thee,
> But for the common things of earth,
> The purple pageantry
> Of dawning, and of dying days,
> The splendour of the sea,
> The royal robes of autumn moors,
> The golden gates of spring,
> The velvet of soft summer nights,
> The silver glistering
> Of all the million, million stars,
> The silent song they sing.

The history both of Science and Art declares how

fruitful this attitude of friendship with Nature has proved to be, and how much it has added to the fulness of human life; so that, however much the cruelties and apparent disorders of Nature may tempt us to distrust her, yet we were wiser to put these cruelties down to our ignorance, which can be healed by knowledge, rather than to any lack of love in the heart of nature itself. Lastly, we have seen how maimed and crippled life is, unless, and until, it can look death in the face, and know it for what it is, the falling asleep to wake again refreshed. These are the certainties which in some measure we must have to live, and yet it is doubtful whether even for the saints they ever become absolute certainties in this life. We walk by faith and not by sight. There is always, and for everyone, the possibility of doubt, the possibility of believing that this is not the truth about life, and that God is too good to be true. This doubt is, in a very real sense, the devil, the great adversary. Faith, which is the name by which we call life at its highest, is, as life is, a form of energy. It is life force, seeking to expand into fuller life, seeking to preserve, and realise itself. It is life in open rebellion against death. To say that we live by faith and not by sight, is but another way of saying that we are incomplete, unfinished, not made but in the making, and that we must either grow or die. Faith is the highest form of the will to live. It is not static but dynamic. It must for ever operate against the gravity of doubt; like life, it must always be overcoming obstacles. It is not easy to believe the Christian faith. It is not easy to hold consistently to any faith whatsoever about the universe. Easy faith is a form of doubt, it is the suicide of reason, and reason is an element of life. Easy faith is a part of the will to death, not of the will to life. Credulity is a refusal of the cross of

thought, and the crown of thorns which every honest critic wears; and, like every refusal of the cross, it means that we must forfeit the crown of life. Reason must not be killed, nor criticism stifled, even when they seem to threaten faith. Both must be kept alive and strong. Their strife is life, and to starve or slay either is to lose the glory of the only real victory. The purpose of faith is the perfection of reason.

> I must have God. This life's too dull without,
> Too dull for aught but suicide. What's man
> To live for else? I'd murder someone just
> To see red blood. I'd drink myself blind drunk,
> And see blue snakes if I could not look up
> To see blue skies, and hear God speaking through
> The silence of the stars. How is it proved?
> How can you prove a victory before
> It's won? How can you prove a man who leads,
> To be a leader worth the following,
> Unless you follow to the death, and out
> Beyond mere death, which is not anything
> But Satan's lie upon eternal life.
> Well—God's my leader, and I hold that He
> Is good, and strong enough to work His plan
> And purpose out to its appointed end.
> I am no fool, I have my reasons for
> This faith, but they are not the reasonings,
> The coldly calculated formulæ
> Of thought divorced from feeling. They are true,
> Too true for that. There's no such thing as thought
> Which does not feel, if it be real thought
> And not thought's ghost—all pale and sicklied o'er
> With dead conventions—abstract truth—man's lie
> Upon this living, loving, suff'ring Truth,
> That pleads and pulses in my very veins,
> The blue blood of all beauty, and the breath
> Of life itself.

It is no more easy to believe than it is to live. Even a negative faith is not easy. It is not easy even to be an agnostic or an atheist. You cannot do that without crushing down and suppressing

the cry within you, "What does it mean?" and the more you know, the wider your world of consciousness becomes, the louder and more clamorous within you grows that cry, "What does it mean? What does it mean?" To be faced with a book like the book of life, written in letters of blazing beauty, tragic blood, and leaping flame, which challenges you to read it every day, and then tamely to give it up, saying, "I can't make head or tail of it," is a maddening business. Yet we cannot even begin to read it without some act of faith. Even supposing we repudiate the faith of "Our Father," and take up a contrary position—that the world is a chaos, a series of accidents, and that life has no meaning, but is just one beastly thing after another—even then life will not let us rest, unless we drug ourselves to sleep. If we try, with Mr. Bertrand Russell, to build the soul's habitation safely on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, holding it as the one great certainty, "That man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end which they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and his fears, his loves and his beliefs are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought or feeling can preserve an individual beyond the grave; that all the labour of the ages, all the devotion, all the noonday brightness of the human genius are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, when the whole temple of man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the débris of a universe in ruins. All these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand." Even when you get down as deep as that, there remains, as Mr. Bertrand Russell hints, uncertainty. Even as he writes, he is evidently troubled by the

haunting beauty of his own prose. He protests overmuch, for certainty. He is defiant like a man in doubt. So it must ever be. Take up that faith, or unfaith, and you must defend it every day. You will be challenged by the beauty of your children, by the love in your own wife's eyes, by the splendour of the sunset, by the haunting melody of a perfect song, or the memory of a golden day; and you will be challenged and haunted continually by the Face of Christ.

> Just when we are safest, there's a sunset touch,
> A fancy from a flower bell, someone's death,
> A chorus-ending from Euripides—
> And that's enough for fifty hopes and fears,
> As old and new at once as Nature's self,
> To rap and knock and enter in our souls,
> Take hands and dance there, a fantastic ring,
> About the ancient idol on its base
> The grand Perhaps.

Whether we believe in God or the devil, we must defend our faith against doubt. Nothing can deliver us from making our act of faith, and making it again and again; and only as we persist in making it, can it lead us within sight of the snowy mountain peaks of spiritual certainty. Life is a pilgrimage. We set out, like explorers, to seek the white pole-star of truth; and, when we wake in the cold grey morning of our doubts, we must either lie down and perish, asleep amidst the everlasting snows, or we must renew our faith in the star we follow and the bourne we seek, and, pulling ourselves together, set out again, making an act of faith with every step we take. Life is a spiritual pilgrimage, and there is always present the possibility at any moment, on any day, of any year, of turning back and facing the other way. There lies before us a continual choice, a reiterated momentary crisis. That is what life is, and as such it was put before us by Christ, and is always being put before

us by Christianity. Life is a choice betwixt heaven and hell.

But what does that choice mean? What is heaven, and where is it? Is it a place, or a state of mind? Is it here or hereafter? What is hell? Is it a place or a state of mind? Is it here or hereafter? To these questions the Creed returns a definite and decisive answer. Heaven is where God is. God is here, and now, and so is heaven. God will be hereafter, and so will heaven. Hell is, where God is not, and that may be here and now for us. Hell is, where God is not—and that may be hereafter for us too. Heaven is the truth about earth. It is what earth really is. It is the true meaning of life, both here and hereafter.

> O world as God has made it; all is beauty,
> And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.
> What further can be sought for or declared?

Nothing. Knowing this is knowing the final truth. Beauty, love, and goodness form the truth about life here and now, and to possess beauty, love, and goodness is to be in heaven; to be without them is to be in hell. Progress, real human progress, whether it be progress of the individual or of the community, is not, and never can be, anything else but an increase in our knowledge and realisation of the beauty, love, and goodness which make up the meaning of life. There is not, and never can be, any other progress for us but this, and change is only progress so far as it ministers to this. Our Father is in heaven; and heaven is the knowledge of beauty, love, and goodness.

That is the bedrock meaning of the phrase.

Men looked up from the wild and warring earth with its constant wail of strife and discontent—looked up to where the stars went sailing through the great

wide sea of blue, like ships that pass in the night, or like a white-robed army with torches, marching on, in ordered ranks unbroken, from dawn to darkness and from darkness on till dawn; and they saw in that silent order the best and most fitting symbol of the perfect beauty, love, and goodness for which their hearts were longing, and they cried out, "Our Father, which art in heaven!" It may be doubted whether the best of them ever bothered their heads about the distinction between a place and a state of mind; and it is doubtful whether we need bother our heads either, for a place is never very much but a state of mind. A place is always what a man sees in it, and thinks of it. It is to him what it means to him. Even John Milton, who, I suppose, is made responsible as much as anyone else in England for the idea that heaven and hell are places, knew very well that a place is a state of mind. We forget that he was a poet, and we read his sublime blank verse as though it were a theological treatise composed by a bookish blind philosopher. Milton knew the truth quite well.

> . . . . Farewell, happy fields,
> Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,
> Infernal World! and thou, profoundest Hell,
> Receive thy new possessor—one who brings
> A mind not to be changed by place or time.
> The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.

I remember standing with a friend of mine, who was as yet unborn—or, at any rate, if he was born, his eyes were still shut like a kitten's. We were watching the sun go down behind the blue Welsh hills, and turn the still wet sands of Dee into a glory of rainbow colours. I was honestly struck dumb for a time, but he continued talking about the extraordinary powers of his new motor bicycle, and when I said, "Is not

that glorious?" he replied, "What's up?" We were both in the same place; and yet I was in heaven, and, if he was not in hell, he was getting close to the jaws of it. He was utterly unconscious of the true meaning and value of the place wherein he stood. He stood, as we all for ever stand, on holy ground; but he took off neither hat nor shoes, because his soul was blind.

I doubt whether we are justified in thinking ourselves so much in advance of our fathers because we no longer believe in heaven and hell as places. It may mean, and certainly often does mean, that we have ceased to believe in them as realities at all, and that is not an advance; it is a very definite turning back. No better description of heaven could be given than the chorus of the hymn, "O Paradise, O Paradise," which is so often criticised and in some ways rightly criticised.

> "Where loyal hearts and true
> Stand ever in the light,
> All rapture through and through
> In God's most holy sight."

That is heaven, and that heaven can be, and often is, wherever two or three are gathered together in His Name, and He stands there in the midst of them. But, although that heaven is so near, closer than breathing, nearer than hands or feet, yet it is a long way off; because the road that leads to it is the way of the Cross, the way of sacrifice, which all men fear to tread; and, because they fear to tread it, they are always postponing their start upon it, or, having started, are always turning back. That is the real danger of putting off heaven to the hereafter. *It means that we do not set out in earnest to find it here on earth; and if we do not begin to find it here, we certainly shall not find it hereafter.* I have no reason whatsoever

for supposing that I shall be any nearer heaven by the mere act of death than I am now; neither mere living nor mere dying can in themselves bring me nearer heaven. Everything depends upon *how* I live and *how* I die. Mere lapse of time cannot lead us to eternity. Heaven is not another world from this, as a matter of time. It is another world from this as a matter of kind. It is this world and the next seen in another light, the light that never was on land or sea, which shines in the eyes of those who have made their peace with God. Postponing heaven means doubting its truth—that is the only sense in which it can be postponed. The distance of heaven from earth is measured not in moments, nor in miles, but in terms of faith or of doubt. If we put it off to the hereafter, it tends to become an ideal rather than a truth; and an ideal, which is not recognised as a truth, is something which everyone is expected to honour, and no one is expected to attain.

There is a story told of an English journalist who was sent to Ireland to discover the real feelings of the Irish peasantry with regard to Home Rule. He approached a peasant sowing potatoes, and remarked, "Well, Patrick, I hear you are going to have Home Rule." "Och, indade, we are, glory be to God," replied the peasant. "Yes," said the Englishman cheerily, "you are going to have it within a few months, arn't you?" The peasant's face fell. "What do ye mane?" he said, "It'll be the ruin of the country!" "Why, don't you want Home Rule?" asked the journalist. "Of course, I do," replied Pat, "I'm as good an Irishman as anybody." "Well, then, I give it up," the enquirer replied. "And so ye would," said the Irishman, "arn't ye the stupidest people on God's earth? But it's as plain as the nose in the middle of your face.

If I told ye you were going to heaven, you would be very glad, wouldn't ye; but if I told ye, ye were going to heaven to-night, ye'd be in the very divil of a frant."

There is the case in a nutshell. Our belief in heaven is very often not a religious belief at all. It is nothing but a vague sentiment, or worse; and it will continue so to be, so long as we fix heaven in the hereafter. The Dean of St. Paul's puts this matter in a nutshell. "Belief in a future life is sometimes a" "religious belief, but by no means always. If I" "believe in a future life because I enjoy my existence" "here, and want to perpetuate it beyond my earthly" "span, that has nothing to do with religion. If" "I desire a future life because I am miserable here," "and think that I have a claim to compensation" "hereafter, that is not religion. If I desire a future" "life because I have made certain investments in" "good works, on which I hope to make a handsome" "profit, in the words of the hymn,

> "Whatever, Lord, we lend to Thee
> Repaid a thousand-fold will be;
> Then gladly will we give to Thee,
> Who givest all"

"—that has no more to do with religion than if I" "invested my money on the faith of one of the very" "similarly-worded prospectuses, which I find on my" "breakfast-table." If I desire a future life for any other reason than the love of the beautiful, the good, and the true, and the conviction that goes with that love, if it be sincere, that they are deathless—it is not a religious belief. To manufacture a heaven of our own is the quickest road to hell. But we must not postpone our search for the true heaven. We must begin now. That is why the impatience of the working-people with our talk about heaven hereafter,

an impatience which the Dean of St. Paul's strongly condemns, is partly justified. They instinctively perceive, what is very largely true, that they are being put off from their efforts to realise a good life here, by the promise of the good life sometime hereafter. It is, of course, true that they very often have a wrong idea of heaven and the road thereto, and think of it as a kind of material paradise, which can be achieved by violence, by the ballot box, by class war, or by legislation and political propaganda—which is a lie; but they are right in believing that heaven can, and must, be sought and found here, if it is to be found at all. They are convinced that life, here and now, is meant to be made beautiful and good and true; and they rebel, and rightly rebel, against the cowardice and self-deception which would postpone the reign of God into a future life. There is much more appreciation of the true values of life behind the Labour Movement than its enemies give it credit for, or some of its friends either, for the matter of that. In so far as it is a purely secular movement, which seeks to realise the millennium of more beer, less work, and higher wages, a kingdom of perfect comfort here on earth, it is the most pernicious of all delusions; and rightly is it said that it promises "men an earthly paradise at the end of a flowery path, and leads them to a premature hell at the end of a way of blood." So far as Christianity and the visible Christian Church become really secularised, and make religion a means to the end of attaining a kingdom of comfort, they definitely ally themselves with the devil. But in our terror lest we secularise the sacred, we must not be turned from our true task of sanctifying the secular. Beauty, goodness, and truth are indeed spiritual, but they are not abstract; and it is fatal to confuse the spiritual with the abstract. The

spiritual is not merely the negation of the material. Spirit is not the opposite of matter; it is its true meaning. We cannot really know, or advance in the knowledge of, the Good, the Beautiful, and the True, apart from good people, true thought, and beautiful things. And so far as the Labour Movement* has for its object the producing of more good people, more true thought, and more beautiful things upon earth, it is a spiritual movement of the very best sort, and demands the sympathy and support of every Christian, because it is out to build heaven on earth; believing, and rightly believing, that if we do not strive to build it here, we shall never build it anywhere.

The worship of abstract goodness, and the endeavour to obtain salvation by turning one's back upon, and adopting an attitude of lofty contempt for, the secular concerns of the world, produces nothing, but a kind of piety of which one would say as the schoolmen said about concupiscence, "rationem habet peccati"—it has of itself the nature of sin. However difficult it may be, and it is difficult, to see and to realise the unity of the secular and sacred, it remains true that to see it and to realise it is the essence of religion. The secular without the sacred is a body without a soul, and that inevitably becomes a putrefying mass, which can do nothing but stink, and foster parasites. That is why a godless international policy has produced rats and rotting corpses in the Valley of the Somme, and why a godless commercial and industrial system produces gilded vice and filthy slums. But the sacred without the secular is a soul without a body; and, whatever that may be, it is not

* The Labour Movement must not be confused with the political Labour Party. The movement is a much bigger thing than any party could possibly be.

human, and is not the truth of what we are meant to be either here or hereafter; for "there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body," and the idea that we are on our road to become bodiless spirits is not Christian, and is not true. It is perfectly true that a combination of bad theology with crude, revolutionary politics will ruin the Church; but it will also ruin the Church if she submits to that commonly-believed and literally damnable lie, that politics is one department of life, and religion another. It is true also, as the Dean of St. Paul's says, that "The Labour Movement can provide its own hired advocates; the business of the clergy is to preach the Gospel, and to speak the truth." But the Gospel is the Great Good News that the reign of God can, and must, be realised upon this earth; that tyranny, trickery, and covetousness can, and must, be replaced by freedom, honesty, and loving service; and that the wilderness of filth and degradation, upon which one's eyes look out as one travels through the industrialised portions of what was once green and merry England, can and must be made to blossom like the rose with beauty, light, and health. And the effort to attain that, is not, and never can be, a purely secular object. We must seek heaven here, and set off now. We must not allow heaven to become an empty dream, but remember that we can get as close to God to-day as we ever can. We must not say within ourselves:

It is too far away;
It were presumption to suppose the span
Of our poor human life were long enough
To travel there. Let us then wait God's time,
And when our little evening fades away
To darken into night of death, we shall
Awake to find ourselves within its gates.
So many have set out and fallen faint

And weary by the way ; so many saints
Have left their bones to witness how they failed,
Shall we poor sinners then succeed ? Vain hope !
It is not for this world, nor of this world,
That Kingdom of the Christ. It lies beyond
The mountains, where the sun of this life sets.

So coward pilgrims talk
To comfort their faint hearts, and soothe to peace
Uneasy consciences that call within,
And bid them rise, awake and walk the way,
The steep white way of wonder up to God.
It is not far—'tis but a little way,
But steep, over the hill of Calvary
And through the Garden, where the Tomb, rock-hewn,
Stands empty, with a great stone rolled aside.
There lies the path. Via Dolorosa
Gaudiens, the way of joyous sorrow,
Peaceful pain, that, 'neath the rainbow arches
Of God's Love, winds to the Land of Sunshine,
Through the rain.

Men have postponed heaven and likewise postponed hell, and by postponing them, have ceased to look upon them as realities. We can no longer frighten people by the threat of hell-fire. They simply do not believe in it. They cannot conceive of a God, Who is Love, and Who yet could sentence men to everlasting torment ; and, to a large extent, that *is* an advance. The belief in hell, which played so large a part in the religion and life of our forefathers, had a good deal of human wickedness in it. It was largely because men envied the wicked here, that they desired to see them punished hereafter. It was because they wanted God to do for them, what they could not do for themselves—take vengeance upon their enemies—that they invented these torture-chambers in the world beyond. Men tend to imagine that God is such a one as themselves—that His ways are their ways ;

and it does indicate a real advance, that these gruesome pictures of cruel torture repel the ordinary man of to-day, and violate his sense of justice. But when this repulsion leads men to suppose that there is no hell, that hell is not a reality, it indicates the same kind of blindness to the real values of life, as is present in the people who say that there is no heaven.

Our fathers tried to drive men into heaven by threatening them with the horrors of hell. The truth is, that a man cannot see the horrors of hell, until he has caught a glimpse of the joys of heaven. You cannot learn the Love of God through the fear of hell. You can only learn the fear of hell through the Love of God. Less and less do men fear God, and less and less can be accomplished by preaching the fear of Him; but that lack of fear may result, either from the blackest blindness, or from real vision. I do not fear God. He could not, and would not, do me any harm, anywhere, or at any time. If I have any fear of Him, it is a fear that is born of love, a fear of grieving Him, which love begets. He is, and always has been, and always will be, pure, infinite, unmitigated Love. His justice cannot be separated from His Love—justice has no meaning apart from love. If He is the Judge of the World, He is not in the least like a human judge, for a human judge does not administer justice in any true sense of that word. Human justice is a caricature and a travesty of the Divine. The human judge administers those pains and penalties, which a chaotic and sinful community believe to be necessary in order that some measure of order and decency may be maintained; but, in the nature of things, the man condemned must often be less of a sinner than the jury that condemns him. What mainly governs the penalties imposed, is, not what is calculated to redeem the criminal, nor what

is the absolutely right retribution for his wrong—absolutely right retribution is impossible to fix—but what is assumed to be necessary to deter others from committing like crimes.

Not long ago, a man was sentenced to ten years' penal servitude for holding up a post office and shooting at a policeman. He was one of the army of unemployed in London. He had a wife and two children; he paid 8s. 3d. a week for two rooms in Whitechapel which were so dark that the gas had to be kept burning all the time; he had fought in the army and been wounded, and he had done ten weeks' work in eighteen months. He was not a good character, being weak and easily led; but in any decent community rightly ordered, he would in all probability have led quite a decent life. But in "justice" he is to serve ten years. I am not disposed to rail at the courts—I think the sentence was inevitable for *the protection of society*, but purely for that reason, and not because it is just. He is suffering as much for the sin of the world, for your sin and mine, as for his own. With that sort of justice, God has nothing to do. He will never send anybody to hell—He could not, for to send a man to hell would be to drive him away from Himself; and whosoever cometh, either here or hereafter, He will not cast him out.

We have really nothing to fear from God, and I am not afraid of Him; *but I am terrified of life without Him, for that is hell.* Apart from God, when the sense of His presence grows dim and disappears, when men lose their hold upon goodness and beauty and truth, there appears to be no accursed cruelty, no damnable crime, no hideous villainy of which they are not capable. Men without God are infinitely lower than the beasts. A man who does not believe in hell, and who fought in Flanders and in France, must be

as blind as forty bats in a room lit by a searchlight. A man who does not believe in Hell, and has lived in Ireland or in Russia for the last ten years, must be almost past praying for. Hell! good Lord, it's all around us, every day and everywhere; not only in those crude and brutal forms of it, which we see when large bodies of men lose their hold on God, but in countless individual lives which touch upon ours every day. I have talked to-day with a man in hell. He believes in nothing and in nobody. He sneers at human goodness, and laughs at the idea of innocence. He is for ever enjoying himself, and yet I never saw anyone so utterly devoid of joy. He is without God in the world, and therefore he is in hell.

Hell is life without God; and that can be, and often is, the most terrible of all realities. That is what I am afraid of—life without God. I am afraid of it for myself, and I am afraid of it for my people. When I used to walk about the slums in which I worked, passing from house to house among broken and despairing women, hundreds of whom had taken to drink—and when I get near to the heart of the West End of London with its drugs and its prostitution—I murmur to myself: "They lie in hell like sheep, and death gnaweth upon them." And there seems to me to be for them no morning, no fresh dews of early dawn, and no sweetness of the sunshine ever, unless the Eternal Love can find a way to turn their darkness into light. Straight is the gate and narrow is the way, and few there be that are finding it. That, alas, is dreadfully true. How many in the end will find it—how many here, or hereafter, will enter into the Kingdom of His Grace—we must leave with Him. Here we can only hope and work.

> A linnet that had lost his way
> Sang on a blackened bough in hell,

Till all the ghosts remembered well
The wind, the trees, the golden day.

At last they knew that they had died,
When they heard music in that land,
And someone there stretched forth a hand
And drew a brother to his side.

Then hell was hell no longer. For hell cannot be where love and beauty are. God grant we find it true, "Even if I go down into hell, Thou art there also."

IV *Hallowed be Thy Name*

We have seen that life is a daily and hourly choice between Heaven and Hell—that is, a choice between life with God and life without God, for life with God is heaven, here and hereafter, and life without God is hell, here and hereafter. Earth is the twilight between the night of hell and the sunshine of Heaven ; and the true destiny of the soul is to press for ever forward, from that twilight, into the noonday brightness of the perpetual presence of God, the perpetual presence of Beauty, Goodness, and Truth. But God must have a Name, we cannot live by or worship the abstract, and for us what men call the "purely spiritual" is just as much an abstraction as the "purely material." For us, God does not exist, and cannot be conceived of, as a reality, apart from His will and purpose in the world. That does not mean that He could not exist apart from the world, or that the world is necessary to Him ; but it does mean that *we* cannot conceive of Him as a reality apart from His relation to us, and the work that He has for us to do. The miner who was asked whether he believed in God, and replied : "Well, I reckon there must be a kind of a summat somewhere," was just as far from, and as near to, religion, as the academic philosopher who bids us worship abstract Beauty, Goodness, and Truth.

Much of our religious devotion is as futile as our philosophy, productive of nothing but beautiful

theories, passing emotions, and rather sickly sentiment, because we attempt to go beyond, or do without, the Incarnation, and to worship an absolute God divorced from His work in the world. This absolute God is, of necessity, an unknown God. We cannot know God, except in and through His relation to us, and the world in which we live, and His purpose for us and all mankind. To attempt to worship a God without a name, is to attempt the impossible. The universal can grip and hold us, but always, and only, through the particular. We may say that we worship Beauty; but it does not lay hold of us, thrill us, and transform us, until we see a beautiful thing, or know a beautiful person. We may say we love Goodness; but goodness never really captures us until it looks at us with human eyes, speaks with a human voice, and is expressed in noble deeds. We may follow the white star of Truth; but it is always the desire to know the truth of something, or of somebody, that stirs us to suffer and to sacrifice. "We fall in love with persons, not with qualities. It is just you, here and now, that we turn to, not to any abstract construction out of general principles." That is as true of God as it is of my Mother. Religion is falling in love with God; and it is impossible to fall in love with an abstract God, He must have a name.

Before we can live with God as friends, we must be introduced to Him; and the first step in an introduction is to give us the name of a friend—a name which, as we grow to love Him, will become more and more potent to stir us to the very depths, as no abstract Beauty or Goodness could ever do. Religion is friendship with God, and the beginning of it is the knowing of God's Name. Even to call Him "Our Father," is not to name Him. The meaning of Fatherhood is not fixed; it has held many meanings and

stood for many values, and does still. There are Fathers and Fathers, and always have been. The Roman Father stood in a very different relation to his child from that of the modern Father to his children. Their "Patria Potestas" was as absolute as it could very well be. And when I tell a small boy in the slums that God is his Father, I often wonder what he makes of it, when his idea about Fathers may be that they beat Mothers, and are generally drunk.

Even to call Him the "Good Father" is not enough; for the meaning of goodness is not fixed. It may mean mere good nature, and a general disposition to make allowances. "Our Father" is not really the Name of God, the name of God is "Jesus." The Christian faith says boldly to mankind, "Come," "let us introduce you to God. His name is Jesus," "and He was a Carpenter by trade. Hold out your" "hand, and He will take it in His. Shake hands" "—shake hands first—and then, because if you" "really see Him you will feel like that, kneel down." "He is a big Person, this Carpenter, He has made" "a Name for Himself. Great kings have owned" "Him for their King, wise men have found in Him" "their truth. He comes to you surrounded by an" "innumerable host, among whom are the choicest," "finest spirits that have ever broken bread on" "earth, or walked the ways of men."

But you cannot mean that seriously, you say. You don't honestly think that a Galilean peasant could really reveal to men the Creator of the world? Surely this sort of talk belongs to a bygone age, an age when man lived in a little world, with small ideas of space and time? Look up at the stars, and think of them in the terms of modern astronomy, and you will see how absurd this is. This calling of the Creator by a pet name, is like trying to domesticate

Mount Everest. That sort of thing was all very well before science came and taught us the real nature of the Universe, and disclosed to us its unfathomable immensities ; but surely now it is absurd ? Knowing what we do, why should we suppose that we matter more to God than a colony of ants matter to us, or that He cares any more for our troubles, sins, and sorrows than we care for the squabbles of puppy-dogs upon the hearthrug at our feet ? Nature has no morals and no heart, she is as careless as the callous stars. What right have we to suppose that we are any more important than the rest of the animal creation, which we exterminate for our convenience ? "It is an unproved assumption that the domination" "of the planet by our own species is a desirable thing" "which must give satisfaction to the Creator. We" "have devastated the loveliness of the world ; we" "have exterminated several species more beautiful" "and less vicious than ourselves ; we have enslaved" "the rest of the animal creation, and have treated" "our distant cousins in fur and feathers so badly," "that beyond doubt if they were able to formulate" "a religion they would depict the devil in a human" "form."

There is much of this sort of talk about, and it sounds exceeding wise. But is it ? A good deal of it is just unconscious, but crass materialism. We do not realise how much the great machine gets into us, and moulds our very minds into its own likeness, forcing us to think of everything in terms of quantity rather than quality, forcing us to think even of the Creator as being like the soulless monster that we serve, which produces everything and creates nothing. We think of nations in terms of population, of wealth in terms of pounds and pence, of power in terms of force, and of the Universe in terms of miles of space.

And so we end by thinking of God in the same way, very much as a vulgar tourist measures the Swiss Alps, in feet, and wants to see the highest. God, we think, is too big to be revealed in Jesus of Nazareth.

But all this is not so much thinking as confusion of thought, a confusion of quantity with quality, an attempt to measure the immeasurable, and weigh the imponderable. It is like buying beauty by the bale, or measuring old masters by the yard. Very often it is little more than pride of intellect, a species of vulgarity commonly found in superior people; a weak surrender to the temptation to despise humanity, which is the infallible sign of a small person, and the special curse of those who live, and move, and have their being only in the world of books.

It may, indeed, be an unproved assumption that man was meant to dominate this planet, but it is an assumption which we have been compelled to make. If I met a tiger, either I should have to assume that I was of more value than the tiger, or the tiger would assume that he was of more value than I, and act upon the assumption with a promptitude and earnestness which would effectively prevent my assuming anything ever any more. And, more or less, that has been the situation all through. It is hard to see how man could have developed his personality at all, without constantly seeking to rise superior to his environment. Of course, it is an unproved assumption that human personality is worth developing; but that also is an assumption about which, as William James would say, man has never had a "living option." We are by our very natures compelled to make it.

Christianity quite frankly takes these things for granted; because, you see, its object is to teach men to live, not to answer academic conundrums. Its

great hypothesis, as we have seen, is that man is the son of God in a unique and special sense, a sense in which no other creature on earth is the son of God. It takes for granted that human life is the highest quality of life on this planet, that the whole gigantic process of evolution was in travail with man from the beginning, and that all other forms of life lead up to, and find their meaning in him.

In doing that, it only assumes what life compels us to assume every day. We assume it when we wear boots and eat bread. What right have I to kill the gentle and contented cow, or to take its life from the golden corn ? Surely both are much more beautiful than man. What right have I to destroy them ? I don't know ; but I am perfectly certain that I have the right, and I propose to go on doing it. I am going to eat cod-fish within an hour from now ; and my eyes will not run over with salt water for the wrong done to the cod.

I assume, because the universe compels me to assume, that human personality is the greatest thing on earth, the supreme achievement of God ; and I callously and brutally disregard the claims of dogs, cats, horses, elephants, and fleas to any sort of equality with man. And in spite of his sin, of his cruelty, and of his ugliness, I maintain that the greatest thing on earth is a man.

Assuming this, and I assume it quite comfortably because I cannot live unless I do, I should expect to find the meaning of the universe revealed in and through a human personality. The final truth might be more than, but it could not be less than, personal. We have got into a way of supposing that final Truth must be expressed in terms of laws and principles, rather than in persons, must be expressed " scientifically " is the cant phrase ; and the aim and object

of science is to eliminate personality from everything it touches. It has the greatest contempt for Anthropomorphism. But that is exactly why "science" never can, and thank God does not now pretend to, attain to final truth. Scientific truths are always truths about a part divorced from the whole—abstract, and not ultimate.

The intellectuals may rail at the picture-book theology of the common man; but picture-book theology is the only possible clothing for real religion. The Word must take flesh and dwell among us, and in the flesh men must behold the glory of the Only-Begotten of the Father, or they cannot be inspired by His grace and truth. The Universal Beauty must create a picture before I can say, I see. Universal Goodness must perform an action before I can say, I love. Universal Truth must have a biography before I can say, I understand.

We are always being told that the Church must move with the times, and adopt the scientific point of view; but whether it is good or evil to move with the times, depends upon the direction in which the times are moving. If a man is standing on the edge of a precipice, the proper place for his friend is to be hanging on to his coat-tails, not boldly leading in the van to inevitable disaster. It may not be a dignified position, but it is the only one that is any use. And this modern tendency to study truth in departments, and to work the world in departments, can only lead to disaster.

The proper work of the Church is to pull men back from the precipice, to turn them round, to convert them and bring them face to face with the Truth, expressed in the supremely perfect personality of Jesus of Nazareth. In Him the universal values of Beauty, Goodness, and Truth become concrete, and

therefore powerful to save. In Him, God becomes a known and living leader. "There is always some" "kind of uniqueness in the men whom the world" "distinguishes as leaders, something that appeals" "to the imagination. No man is great merely" "because he preaches a particular doctrine. Whether" "it be in his deeds or in his words or in his writing," "what moves those who follow him is what is beyond" "his mere doctrine, that in him which fires the" "imagination and makes others feel that in him" "there is what cannot be adequately described or" "forecast. He is for them an individual marked" "out from the others around him by a quality that" "cannot be exhausted in any phrases. It suggests" "what is not capable of being included in any" "abstract description. The universal is there, but" "in union with a particularity that gives it dynamic" "force. Here also we have the concrete universal," "and we feel that in his way, if we recognise him as" "leader, we shall not look on just the like of this" "man again."

What Lord Haldane says, and truly says, of any leader, applies in an utterly unique and special way to the personality of Jesus of Nazareth. By the sheer force of His own immense personality, He has so impressed Himself upon mankind, and upon human history, and continues so to impress Himself, that the only adequate description we can give of Him is that He is Incarnate God; that, in the human Jesus, dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead, under bodily conditions. In Him all that we can ever know of the Universal becomes concrete, and therefore becomes powerful to save. We cannot conceive of Goodness as meaning anything else, but what it means in Him, and that is His supreme achievement. Instinctively men take Him as the Judge of all mankind, and

therefore as their God. We cannot conceive of Beauty save such as He can bless; to attempt it is to divorce Beauty from Goodness, which ultimately leads to the destruction of both. And we cannot conceive of the truth of the universe as being anything less than the supremely Good and Beautiful Person, Who took the children in His arms and blessed the sons of men.

Men may refuse to acknowledge Him as God, and yet all attempts to set up any other standard of Beauty or of Goodness seem doomed to fail. Friedrich Nietzsche had the sense to preceive that, so long as men continued to see in Jesus perfect Goodness and perfect moral Beauty, the doctrine of His Divinity was secure from all attack; but his attempt to set up another standard was a dismal failure, as all such attempts will be. It is not merely that men feel that He enunciated the most perfect ethical system that the mind of man could conceive, that His was the perfect doctrine; they feel that He was even greater than His doctrine. It was not merely that never man spake as He spake, but that never man was what He was and is.

To the rational arguments for and against His Divinity, there seems to be literally no end; but it is impossible to prove, or disprove, the proposition by purely rational argument. His Divinity could only be disproved by someone else who should succeed in superseding Him in the minds and hearts of men, as the concrete of higher Universal values—that is, by somebody who should impress himself upon us as being *better and more beautiful than Jesus.* It may be said that this is always possible, and that therefore we have no right to call Him Divine. But, once more, the purpose of Christianity is not to answer fancy conundrums, but to teach men how to live;

and there is literally no one else who approaches, much less supersedes, the standard of perfection set by that Life and Death. And so, for me, the name of God is Jesus. Without Him, I have no God, and would have to find another.

Would it not be enough, you say, to state that God is Love? No; that may mean anything or nothing apart from Him; it is a universal that is not concrete, and therefore does not bite and sting. But in Jesus it becomes distinct and powerful. In Him it means, first of all, that God is not force, that God is unarmed; that He is, from the world's point of view, helpless, as helpless as the babe in the manger, or the Christ upon the cross. That He has no weapons wherewith to drive men to His will. That He is for ever persuading, and not compelling.

This is the first tremendous fact about God that the life of Christ reveals. It is a fact so far-reaching and revolutionary in its effect, that it has taken us years to recognise it. Men simply could not bear it. They had always worshipped an armed God, a God with weapons in His hand and instruments of dreadful punishment, and they simply could not understand this revelation of the humility of God. The whole history of Christian theology is largely made up of strenuous efforts to reconcile the armed with the unarmed God.

Here and there men have caught glimpses of the truth, and have known that force is not an attribute of God; but for the most part they have been unable to accept it. They simply could not worship what they did not fear. And yet that is redemption in a nutshell, as St. John perceived. "Perfect Love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment." Men, like children, are never really saved, never really become personalities, until they live righteously, not because

they fear punishment for wrong doing, but because they love the good life.

Here in this perfect Life, in almost every scene of it, we find revealed the meaning of the power of God, and are startled to find that, from the world's point of view, it looks like weakness. And yet, as we go deeper, we perceive how true it is, and begin to understand that force is always, and everywhere, a sign of fear—that is, a sign of weakness. Behind the vast armies and navies which we call the great powers of the world, there is fear. Fear it is that drives us out to war. Fear is the father of ferocity, and the forger of the sword. From the Creative point of view, which is God's point of view, force is weakness, and only Love is power.

This is the truth which, becoming concrete in Christ, challenges the world, bidding men see that they can never be saved until they are brave enough to disarm. If the Church takes up this challenge, she will be brought into inevitable conflict with the world, and her children will be called upon to suffer for their faith. It means that she can have no more to do with Nationalisms and Imperialisms that find their final sanction in force. That she cannot bless national guns and consecrate national Colours. It is going to be the greatest struggle in history, this is. From the battle fields of Flanders and of France, the Christ has come forth vindicated at every point, with a new note of challenge in His voice, proclaiming to mankind that they must either gird themselves to follow Him, or suffer the sorrows of the damned. Not that He wills those sorrows, not that they come from Him, but that apart from Him they are inevitable. This is the first truth that is born of the name of God. It may be objected that the summary of the position by St. Thomas Aquinas still remains true and

irrefutable, namely, that non-resistance to evil has a double meaning, "nam suas iniurias patienter tolerare ad perfectionem pertinet, sed alienas iniurias patienter tolerare ad imperfectionem pertinet et usque ad vitium." "To bear with patience wrongs done to oneself is a mark of perfection; but to bear with patience wrongs done to someone else is a mark of imperfection and even of actual sin." And there is always the crux of the problem. If a criminal or a lunatic runs amok with a revolver, someone must stop him by force, before anyone can attempt to heal or redeem him. Thus it has been sought to reduce pacifism to an absurdity. But this argument leads us to two clear conclusions:—

1. That force is negative in its results and, in itself, adds nothing to mankind. It is not a glorious victory to stop a lunatic; it is an awful necessity.

2. That force can only be used, with reluctance, to protect *mankind as a whole* from criminals and madmen.

From those two conclusions we arrive at the position, that the only form of force which Christians can tolerate or support is a police force—an international police force to protect the world from criminal and lunatic national mobs. This is the real practical alternative with which we are faced. It is not an immediate choice between our present condition and immediate disarmament. It is a choice between National Armaments and International Police. That will come in time, but we are miles from it yet, and we certainly shall not be borne to that rational haven on the crest of the present, largely emotional, reaction from war. Before it comes to pass, there will have to be martyrdom for it on a pretty large scale. Martyrdom for the principle of International Police, which now seems an absurdity, must become a reality.

There will come to the conscience of the world a testing-time, and the Church must be prepared to produce her martyrs if she is to remain a Church at all. It is not a pleasant prospect. I do not want to be a martyr in that way at all. It is morbid to seek martyrdom, and the Church has rightly discouraged it in the past. It will be a beastly business. So many good men will be on the other side. They will have their ideals. There is no ideal which war fever cannot take, and twist to its own purpose. The great words Freedom, Honour, Peace, Justice, will boom out their thrilling challenge, and, reaching down beneath the reason, will wake the ancient instincts from their sleep, and send men out to slay their brothers in an ecstasy of sacrifice. Only when the river of blood has swollen to a sea, and the nations reel back weary from the slaughter, will reason wake again ; and that awakening will be torture, torture of complete disillusion ; but from that torture, please God, will spring to life the Spirit of Triumphant Peace. That will come. I see no escape, and I dare not be confident that I shall survive the ordeal ; the temptation will be terrific. Not plain choice between good and evil—temptation is seldom if ever that—but confusion —with a babel of conflicting voices, and apparent right on both sides. *Those who refuse to take the sword from sloth, cowardice, self-interest, or pride, will damn their souls. Those who take it with a good conscience will be saved through the bitterness of disillusion—and those who refuse to take it out of honest Love for God and Man, will be crucified, but will rise again, to see of the travail of their souls and be satisfied.* So I believe it will be. Sometimes I see a day when I and my son will face one another with that choice between us—and maybe he will choose the other way from

mine—and I shall have to watch him go, because I cannot make him see the Valley of the Somme, and he must make his own. It will be a bitter day. God grant that when it comes, it finds us ready and prepared.

But our picture-book theology does not end there. I see Him sitting with a child upon His knees. I see Him looking down into the upturned face, as the small boy winds His arms about His neck, and I hear Him say in a gentle voice, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." And then suddenly there comes a change over His face. The lips harden, the eyes flash fire, the voice cuts like steel. "Take heed how ye despise one of these little ones, for I say unto you that their angels do always behold the Face of my Father which is in Heaven, and whosoever causes one of these small children that believe on Me to sin, it were better for him to tie a millstone round his neck and jump into the sea." And once again Goodness takes on a note of challenge. There is not much doubt left about the sacredness of human life now. Goodness means that the waste of it, or the degradation of it, is a thing to shiver at. The man who takes up this standard of Goodness is at once at war with the world. He at once assumes a burden that he must carry to the day of his death. As long as there is a wasted, starved or stunted man, woman or child upon the earth he will never know contentment. This is not the abstract goodness of the study, this is the concrete goodness of the street. It is not the mild and gentle live-and-let-live goodness, which can be discussed over the wine in a university common-room as a beautiful idea; it is something that lays hold on a man, and simply drives him out to do some work in the world.

Thou Who art Lord of all the tender pities,
  Mercy Incarnate, human and Divine,
How could we write Thy Name upon these cities
  Wherein Thy children live like herded swine ?

Would not those eyes that saw their angels gazing
  Into the brightness of the Father's face
Turn on this slum, with Love and Fury blazing,
  Shrivelling our souls with shame of such a place ?

Where are My children, those the Father gave you ?
  What have you done with babes that bore my Name ?
Was it for this I suffered so to save you,
  Must I for ever burn for you in shame ?

Yet another picture. I see Him surrounded by His friends, and a quarrel breaks out among them, each fighting in defence of his right to the first place. But He takes a towel and a basin and begins to wash their feet, and lays down the law of life. "You know that the ruling classes in a heathen social order lord it over the others, and their great men tyrannise the people. This is not to be the rule of life among you. In your social order, whoever is ambitious for power let him be the helper of all, and whoever is ambitious for rank let him be the servant of society; just as the Son of Man did not come to get service but to render it, and to give His life as a payment to emancipate the many." Here is Goodness flinging its glove in the face of all false pride, tearing down from their pedestals all tyrants and snobs, turning all crowns into crowns of thorns, all thrones into workshops, and all kings into Saviours of mankind. Here is a goodness that turns the world upside down, and sets up as the sole and single standard of greatness, not "What have you got ?" but "What have you given ? What have you done to help mankind ?" It is a Goodness which would be as fatal to the raucous, scheming demagogue—who only wants to tear tyrants

down that he may take their place, as to the comfortable son of monopoly and privilege, who attains to an entirely false independence, and lives on his fellow creatures. It is a goodness which is poison to parasites.

Yet again, I see Him, sitting in a soldiers' barrack-room, with a crown of thorns set sideways on His head, a dirty horsecloth thrown over His bleeding back, with the spittle of a drunken soldier streaming down His face. He sits there in silence, mysterious silence, and I long to know what is the thought in His mind. And He tells it me. As the Cross is reared into its place, and He is thrown forward on the nails, the silence is broken, and the truth revealed: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." The Christ is faced with His enemies; and you realise the startling truth, that Goodness has no enemies; that it for ever separates the sinner from the sin; that it never deals with evil persons, but only with evil thoughts and evil dreams. You realise that for God, under any provocation whatsoever, hatred is impossible. He simply cannot hate. Nothing justifies it, not even this Crucifixion.

Here is the Goodness that would redeem the world. No man, no nation can really fight for righteousness, that fights for itself with any tinge of hatred in its heart. The whole idea that you have to wait until your enemy repents, before you love him, and seek to redeem him, is contradicted by this Goodness. God does not wait until a man repents to love him; He loves him all the time. He sees him always as His son, and sees sin as the filthy disease that destroys him. And it is the disease, and the disease alone, that He hates and seeks to destroy.

This is the Goodness that would bring us back to realities. Nine-tenths of our wars and battles are

fought in the land of dreams, with unreal people and unreal nations, which our hatred and our fear create. Germany hates and fears a monster called Britain, which does not exist; and Britain retaliates by hating and fearing an equally unreal Germany. The real enemies are the hatred and the fear that blind our eyes, and distort our mental vision. Mr. Jones hates a Mr. Smith who does not exist, and Mr. Smith retaliates by hating an unreal Mr. Jones, and they chase one another through a forest of fears. The working man sets up an employer who does not exist outside his own embittered mind, and makes him equal to the devil; and the employer sets up a workman who only lives in his prejudiced imagination, and shrieks about the danger of Trade Unions to the community.

It is a world of wild delusions, and it is of these delusions that the political mind is very largely made up—that political mind which is literally starving Europe, and driving it to ruin because it entirely prevents the peoples from seeing and facing the facts. The political mind is the root cause of war, and the enemy of all real progress.

In an article which he contributes to the *Manchester Guardian* (Commercial Supplement) on the Reconstruction of Europe, Monsieur Gabriel Hanotaux writes:—"We are talking of the Frenchman, the average Frenchman. I think I ought to warn you, that for him sentiment is often a stronger driving force than all the economic combinations by which you set such store, and this sentiment is called in French 'l'honneur.' When our poor poilus of twenty years and twenty sous a day went to the slaughter on the Marne and at Verdun, what motive animated them—a process of reasoning? No, honour. . . . It may happen one day that the Frenchman, weary of so many humiliations and sophisms, will set his

shoulder to the cart and overturn all the calculations, interested and disinterested, and march where honour calls him; and then what will become of all your reasoning?" What indeed?

There is another name for what the Frenchman calls "l'honneur," a juster name—lunacy, stark staring lunacy. To him this "honour" is a thing to be proud of—but it is in reality a thing to distrust, to examine, and suspect. "One does not examine the grounds of patriotism," an indignant female militarist wrote to me the other day, "it is a God-given instinct." All our instincts are God-given, but if we follow them without "due consideration," as John Stuart Mill says, they often lead us to ruin. The only hope for man is the education and sublimation of instinct. A statesman who can regard with untroubled satisfaction the sentiment which the French call "l'honneur," displays an ignorance of real issues which makes him a danger to the world. From the realist point of view this "honour" is more often than not criminal madness. The mind of the unfortunate poilu, like the mind of all the rest of us at that dreadful time, was made up of clamorous unrealities and lies. We were no more sane than stampeding mules. And as Monsieur Hanotaux rightly said, we may quite easily go mad again. Indeed, we have never become quite sane, and never shall, until what he calls the "moral element" in human affairs, becomes more than an utterly unreal, and purely emotional sentiment of national or personal honour, and becomes a principle, until all these lower and baser passions are burnt up in a passion for humanity, burnt up in the fires of this concrete Goodness that we find in the Christ. Then we may become rational, and the economist may get a fair chance. We may then be able to make some sort of calculation as to where we stand in the present,

and make some reasonable plan for the future. But it is true in the world of international politics, as it is true in the industrial world at home, and true in our individual relationships, that there can never be peace or real fellowship until a stronger, purer passion comes to deliver us from the baser and more bestial passions that ruin us to-day. Mob passion put the Christ to death on the Cross, and mob passion crucifies the Christ to-day. The French are no better and no worse than the rest of us. We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and can only be redeemed by the power of the Christ.

Jesus is the name of God, that is the eternal Truth; and that does not mean that the goodness of Jesus is a far-off and well nigh impossible ideal, after which we must strive, but to which we can never really attain. The goodness of Jesus is the truth about the world in which we now live; and all our troubles, tragedies, and sorrows are the result of rebellion against that truth. The goodness of Jesus is not a fancy, it is the hardest fact in the world—the only hard fact in the world, all other facts are more or less soft. The fact of solid matter softens into ether, into energy, almost into nothingness, and only becomes hard when we find its soul in Him. What are called economic facts, political facts, are all of them, compared with this, the stuff that dreams are made of. The ultimate reality is the Goodness of Jesus. "The very stone which the builders despised has now itself become the corner stone. Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken in pieces, and anyone on whom it falls will be ground into dust." All our schemes and plans which do not take this Goodness into account, can only issue in chaos and confusion worse confounded; and all plans and schemes which contradict it must come at last to

nothingness. The great powers of the world, which look so imposing, are like a rock in the road of an avalanche. They look secure enough and permanent, but wait for a little while, and they will be crushed to powder, and the winds of human history will blow them away as dust. The weakness of God is stronger than men, and the foolishness of God is wiser than men.

There is at last no escape from Jesus. He is coming and must come; and when hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man coming with power and great glory, it will not mean that you see something which will only be real hereafter, it will only mean that your eyes will be open to the vision of what actually is. If we could now see reality, at the name of Jesus every knee would bow in heaven, and earth, and under the earth, and every tongue would confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

V *Thy Kingdom Come*

Not long ago, looking through some old books, I came across a series of lessons for Sunday-school children, written some sixty years ago; they were on the Lord's Prayer, and one of them remains in my memory. It was on the clause "Hallowed be Thy Name," and was in many ways a very good lesson, and yet it gave me the creeps to read. The child was taught that there were three things in the world which bore God's Name—His Book, His House, and His Day—and because these things bore God's Name, they were to be treated with the greatest reverence. There was an excellent illustration of what reverence means. The teacher was to say, "Supposing your Mother died, and left you a Bible as a keepsake, and you came in one day and found a small brother of yours, with dirty hands, licking his fingers to turn over the pages, you would run to him and seize the book and say, 'You mustn't do that, my Mother gave me that, and you must use it carefully and only for the right purpose.'"

The lesson was good in what it taught, and surprisingly good in the way it taught it; and yet it made one shiver, because of what it left out, and what it allowed to be supposed. There were only three things in God's world which bore His Name, and which, therefore, must be used carefully and only for the right purpose. What an idea of the Universe to give a child! Only three things that bear God's

Name; what becomes of the rest? That was the curse of Victorian Christianity—the complete separation of the secular from the sacred. There was only one Day which was God's Day; all the rest were common days. There was only one Book which belonged to God; the rest belonged to God-knows-who. There was only one House which was the Lord's House; the rest were the landlord's, or the devil's—which apparently amounted to very much the same thing, judging by the hovels that were built for the men whose toil was making wealth, in the hideous soot-blackened industrial centres which were growing up, like dirty mushrooms, over all the land.

It was this extraordinary state of mind, divided into completely water-tight compartments, which could lead a really great Christian like Cardinal Newman, when he was questioned about the relation of Christian Faith to social questions, to reply, "I have never considered social questions and their relation to the Faith, and have always looked upon the poor as objects of pity and compassion"—and could lead Wilberforce, the destroyer of slavery, consistently to oppose every attempt to better the condition of the working-people, reminding them that their situation, with all its evils, was better than they had deserved at the hands of God. And that, at a time when devilries beyond description were being perpetrated in Lancashire cotton-mills, Staffordshire ironworks, and Durham coalfields, and repeated in the filthy dens and hovels of every city and village in England. In all the chronicles of human suffering and human shame, of man's strange inhumanity to man—in all the appalling record of cruelty to children—there is little to equal, and nothing to surpass the history of those times. It is not necessary to tell again the oft-told tale of those abominations. And

yet Churchmen of great learning and refinement, and often of lofty piety, appear to have been blind to the sufferings, and deaf to the cry of the workers, and to have occupied themselves in arguing about the true Church.

Those evil days have left their mark behind them. They sowed the wind then, and we reap the whirlwind now; our fathers ate the sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. It will be remembered against the Christian Church for many a day, and Christ our Lord will have to bear it as a reproach, not merely that we were helpless to alter the evil state of things, but that we were, apparently, blind to its existence, even with Him as our Light. That is where it hurts. If we were only a political party, if we only claimed to be human, we might be forgiven; but that the Society with the Divine Spirit in it should be so blind, that is what is so hard to understand. We can only remember that, if the Church is the Body of Christ, it is His crucified Body, crucified and crippled by our infidelity and sin.

But the past is past. Let us at any rate get quite clear about the present. To consent to this division between the secular and the sacred, is to destroy religion. There is nothing in all the world except what is evil, which has not God's name written upon it. All things are His, and all things must therefore be used carefully and only for the right purpose. All days are His days, all books are His books, all houses are His houses. If our finding of God in Churches leads to our losing Him in factories, it were better to tear the Churches down, for He must hate the sight of them. If we seek our God in the Sanctuary, and pass Him by in the street, it were better to break up the altars. The old prophetic message still holds good, and applies to the Church of

to-day as it applied to the Church of three thousand years ago: "When ye come to appear before Me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread My courts? Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hateth: they are a trouble unto Me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide Mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

That applies to the fat churchwarden who made his money by some dirty work at the cross-roads among the Lancashire cotton-mills, or to the sidesman who owns disreputable house-property. It applies just as clearly and inevitably to-day, as it did three thousand years ago. Merely-formal religion is the very devil. It is useless, if not blasphemous, to stand and sing enthusiastically:

> Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
> Doth his successive journeys run;
> His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
> Till moons shall wax and wane no more,

—unless we realise that He, not only shall reign, but does now reign, that He is now the rightful King of every corner of the world, and every department of human life. That He is as much Lord of the mill as He is of the Minster, and as much concerned with the counting-house as He is with the Cathedral. That He is now King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and the only ruler of princes and all those strange new powers that have taken the place of princes—financiers, merchants, big business men, politicians—that they must all bow down before Him as their King, or else we must continue to suffer the tortures of the damned,

and live in a world of darkness and lies. The earth is now the Kingdom of God, and only our blindness prevents us from seeing it as it is. His Kingdom does now stretch from shore to shore, and there will be no peace upon earth until He is acknowledged rightful Lord and Master of mankind.

The Church of Christ has, indeed, come to a point where she must choose and make up her mind as to whether she is going to accept or reject this gospel of the Kingdom. She must decide whether her purpose and duty is to rescue a certain number of individuals out of a lost and ruined world, and to bring them to such a pitch of personal piety that they will be safe for the world to come—or whether it is her purpose and duty to claim the whole world for Christ: to enter boldly into the world of commerce, industry, education, and politics, and declare that there, as everywhere else, His Will must be done, and He must be acknowledged King. It is a tremendous choice; and upon the way in which it is made, depend both the method and the message of salvation.

Are we to go on, as many noble men are going now, buried in some ghastly slum, breaking their hearts and destroying their nerves, in order to rescue from the wreck, caused by rotten conditions, a comparatively small number of men and women, boys and girls? How many men do I know, with heroic women beside them, who are quietly and without fuss crucifying themselves in the filthy places of England, bitterly conscious that even their crucifixion does not save! For every one they save there are ten that go down, and perish through rotten conditions. Must we go on like that? Some of the clever men say we must, that the Kingdom is neither of this world nor for this world; that to pin our faith on the coming of a millennium, and the dream of the Kingdom of

God here on earth, is, first of all, to pin our faith upon an impossibility, and secondly, to degrade religion and stain its purity with secularism. They produce the second law of thermo-dynamics to prove that this world, which gets colder and colder every day, will one day be frozen up and become a dull, dead thing with no life upon it; and since that is certain, how can the Kingdom of God be built here upon earth?

It's a strange confusion of thought, this. They appear to imagine that, because the Kingdom is to be built upon earth, that therefore it depends for its continued existence upon the material earth. But one might equally well imagine that, because a great poem is written with pen and paper, it therefore depends upon the pen and paper for its existence, and would be destroyed if they were destroyed. Obviously this is very far from being the case. A great poem must be written, it initially requires the use of pen and paper, or something to correspond to them; it must take form, it must become concrete. A poem which goes up the chimney with the smoke of one's cigarette is not really a poem at all; it has not taken flesh. But once the poem has taken form, and lives, it can be transmitted and perpetuated in a thousand different ways.

Now, we are or ought to be God's inspired poets. The Kingdom of God is the beauty which has to take form, and become concrete, *and it is in the earth, in the life of the earth,* that we have to express it and so make it real. To refuse to build it here upon earth is, for God's poets, to cast away the pen and refuse to write, to be content with their dreams; to refuse the travail of their souls, to shirk the Cross, to be disobedient to the heavenly vision, and so be damned. Because we build the Kingdom on the earth and with it, that does not mean that we build it for earth

alone. Once built, it is a thing of beauty and a joy for ever to God and man. *But it must be built, not dreamt. And the only bricks we have are made of clay, so we must use them.*

All these fancy pseudo-scientific pictures of the end of the world, based upon the inevitable death of this planet, have nothing whatever to do with the hope of building the Kingdom here on earth, and simply do not come into the question at all. They are founded upon a confusion of thought—a confusion of the means with the end. If you escape this confusion and wisely forbear to base prophecies on shifting scientific foundations, and yet declare that the Kingdom of God is impossible anyhow, and need not concern us as practical men, and you produce as evidence all the evil and the folly of mankind, that merely means that you believe the devil is stronger than God. I have every sympathy with you. There are times when he seems to be. But for goodness' sake do not suppose that there is anything peculiarly novel or enlightened about the idea. Large numbers of people have had it before — especially cowards, cynics, and all the worldly-wise men, whose utter lack of faith in God gives power to the devil's elbow, and enables them to win, as a reward of their implicit trust in Satan, the right to say "I told you so," when disaster overtakes mankind. Verily they have their reward—and all of it.

Ponderously learned pessimism is the most destructive form of pride, but it is picturesque and often lucrative. It is the commonest way by which men seek the prophet's honour without the prophet's pain.

If you say that the attempt to build the Kingdom here upon earth is the secularisation of religion, and tainted with materialism, that means that you are seeking for the abstract goodness of the study rather

than the concrete goodness of the street, and have not laid hold of the gospel of the Incarnate Christ. You are still hankering after the purely spiritual; and it is you that are the materialist, you are afraid of matter; and to think that there is anything evil in matter is just as materialistic as to think there is anything good. Manicheism is a peculiarly destructive form of materialism. It is no good trying to jump out of your own skin.

There is only one way by which men can be saved, and that is by becoming, through His Grace, builders, with God, of the City that hath foundations; and building is not dreaming, it is work. If the Church takes up—as she must take up—the gospel of the Kingdom, she has got to go to the roots of evil, to attack it at its source, and refuse to be content with putting plasters on poor sinners' chests. So the gospel of the Kingdom means a revolution of method. It likewise means a revolution of the message.

The really important battle of theology—(and theological battles can be important, for though theology is not religion, you cannot have religion without theology; it is possible to have thought without conversion, but you cannot have conversion without thought; the first thing that Christ does for every man is to make him think)—the really important theological battle ranges round the Kingdom of God, and what it means, and whether it means anything at all. Our Lord's teaching about the Kingdom is puzzling. Sometimes He appears to regard it as something which is to be a sudden act of God, an apocalypse or revelation breaking in upon the world from the outside; sometimes He talks of it as a slow and silent growth, like the growth of a seed in the earth; and sometimes as an actual present fact here and now.

New Testament critics and learned men have been trying to drive us into a choice between these aspects of our Lord's teaching, implying that the adoption of one involves the rejection of the others. The process by which they do this, is to attack the New Testament with one pre-conceived idea of what the Kingdom must have meant to our Lord; and then declare that every passage which conflicts with that idea is a later addition made by the Early Church. It is the kind of theology which is written by men who have nothing else to do, and its methods are both arbitrary and destitute of any real gain. The men who write it are essentially the kind of people who only think with their brains; and, as that remarkable man Miguel de Unamuno remarks: "There are people who only think with their brains or with whatever may be the specific thinking organ, while others think with all the body and the soul, with the blood, with the marrow of the bones, with the heart, with the lungs, with the belly, with the life. The people who think only with the brain become definition-mongers." And he might have added, "definition-mongers of what cannot be defined."

These are the men that constantly take poetry for prose, the prosiest of prose, and, to quote Dr. Headlam: "Some of the greatest errors in theology have arisen from the literal and dogmatic interpretation of what is intended to be poetical." People who keep a registry-office, instead of a brain and a heart, ought not to write theology. They make it exact, and therefore ridiculous. They murder the Gospel message with the same conscientious stupidity that a school-girl murders Beethoven's Sonatas. The Kingdom of Heaven, they say, cannot be like leaven in a lump, and at the same time like a thief that comes in the night, and yet be all the time within us now.

You must be an upholder of either one aspect or the other. Either our Lord believed in an apocalypse, or in an earthly Kingdom over which He was to reign, or in a purely spiritual Kingdom which was neither of, nor for, this world.

Yet another school would have us believe that, as Christianity was purged of its purely Jewish elements, and its central ideas became more clearly and perfectly expressed in the richer and more flexible vocabulary of Greek philosophy, the idea of the Kingdom tended to disappear altogether, and Christianity became a means to the conquest of the spirit over the flesh in the individual. One of the great arguments by which this idea is supported, is that the idea of the Kingdom of God is much less prominent in the gospel and epistles of St. John, and in St. Paul's epistles, than it is in the gospels of SS. Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

To such controversy there is no end, but I doubt if it leads anywhere, because I doubt if it has any real starting point. There is much controversy like that, it never ends, because it has no beginning but an unverified assumption. There is no necessity to choose between the three strains in our Lord's teaching. Each one needs the other two. They cannot be separated, but must be combined into a stout cord of Christian verity.

The Kingdom of God, which is the reign among men of Beauty, Goodness, and Truth,

> . . . . not abstract but Incarnate Truth,
> Not Beauty vague and distant, but Beauty's
> Very self made flesh and realised in Love,

is, first of all, present here and now. It is the ultimate reality that underlies the whole of life. We are potentially children of the Kingdom, and what we are potentially is what we most really are. Your

true self is your best self.* The Kingdom of Heaven is the ultimate truth about the earth. And yet, from another view-point, the Kingdom is a progress and a growth—for true progress, evolution, or growth, or whatever you choose to call it, is not the creation of anything new, but the realisation of what is as old and new at once as Nature's self—aye, older and newer, because it is Eternal. Progress is rather the casting-off of error than the creation of truth. Man cannot create truth. Scientific discoveries are new to the scientists, but they are not actually new, or if they are, they are not true. Progress is the perpetual Incarnation of God, the process by which the Universal becomes concrete in space, and the Eternal reveals itself in time.

The world, as we have said, is God's poem. In it, like the poet, He sees of the travail of His soul, and like the poet too, is always and yet never satisfied; always rejoicing in creation, always suffering because of limitation, just as the poet is; at once suffering the sorrows of Calvary, and singing the triumph of Easter Day. And it is in man that the crown and climax of God's travail is reached. It is in man that the inspiration becomes really articulate, and begins to sing back its joy to the Creator, as the poem does to the poet. Everyone who has written knows that a thing which is really written, a word that has really taken flesh, has a life of its own, and can often rouse, in the heart of its human creator, a vision and glory that has grown dim or dead. And

* Man is the infinite in process. A mere finite could not aspire or in any way seek to go beyond itself, any more than a cow could be moral. Man can seek to become only that which he potentially is: and what a man is potentially he is most truly—only we must permit what is potential to reveal itself in the process of becoming.—Sir Henry Jones. A Faith that Enquires. P. 190.

so it is in man that we must find the central meaning of the poem; and, the more we study man, the more impossible it becomes to see any meaning in him at all, unless we find that meaning in and through the beloved community, the Kingdom of God.

The process by which man has been produced has, running all through it, one persistent, and to me perfectly evident, intention. All man's peculiar gifts and endowments, by which he is to be distinguished from all other animals, have one plain purpose running through them. If we ask ourselves what the gifts are which make man different from the beasts, evidently and indisputably different, there rises up before us a whole series of peculiarly human endowments: speech, art, music, writing, printing, steam, electricity, telegraphy, telephony, wireless, flying, and broadcasting, and through the whole of this series there runs, and to me quite evidently runs, *the purpose of human unity.* They are, each and every one of them, means to a unity of persons.

But, good gracious, you say, what have these things got to do with religion? There is nothing that has not got to do with religion; and a religion which does not find a meaning in these things is not a religion at all.

The other day I saw a lamp-post: I had never seen one before, and it was a marvellous revelation. I was walking along in a brown study and I bumped into one, and I looked up and said, "My God!" Most unseemly for a clergyman, you say. Not a bit of it. It was the only adequate remark, for there was my God. "His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire;" and there were hundreds of them all down the street, the eyes of God that dim the shining of the stars, and put the moon into the shade. For

though it is true to say that the Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork, it is truer still to look at the shining row of lights that line a London street, and cry out: There is neither speech nor language, but their voice has gone out over all the lands and their song to the ends of the world. A lamp-post is a much clearer and fuller revelation of God than a star, because behind the lamp-post there is man, and man's long battle with the darkness.

I never knew what darkness was until I went to fight in France. I have lived in cities all my life, where man has vanquished it; but there I could picture what it meant to the first men in their caves and forest homes, the horror of those winter nights when they huddled together in the trees or in dark caverns, watching and waiting for the dawn, while the howl of the beasts in search of prey rose up to the silent, cruel stars.

Darkness must have been to them, as it was to us in France, a hideous thing, distorting the whole form of the world, separating friend from friend, the creator of isolation and loneliness, the ever-present symbol of death. That is what darkness means—isolation and loneliness, and the power, which has led man to fight against it, is the power which leads him to war against all isolation and loneliness, it is the power of Love. The lamp-post is the sign of the God of Love, it really is so; this is not fancy, it is fact; it is a lamp-post as a seer sees it (most people never see lamp-posts at all), as the glorious climax of a tremendous struggle against loneliness, a continual reaching after a fuller, richer community life. Think out the whole miracle of a lamp-post and see God in it; see in its light a spark of sunshine laid in the patient bosom of old mother earth a million years

ago, in the leaves of some primeval forest, and there stored up that it might one day flood the world with light, and beat the prince of darkness to his knees.

"The plants, which alone of living forms can" "utilise the energy of sunlight, were at work for man," "ages before the remotest likeness to his image had" "appeared upon this world; and, even then, were" "laying the foundations upon which alone his present" "greatness rests. Quite extraordinary physiogra-" "phical conditions must have prevailed, an alternate" "uplifting and depressing of the bed of the ocean" "time and again, as one age succeeded another," "when the luxuriant forests of the carboniferous" "era flourished in the sun and then sank beneath" "the sea. In this fossilised vegetation, preserved" "as coal, sandwiched between alternate layers of" "shale, is conserved some tiny fraction of the solar" "energy so prodigally radiated throughout those" "bygone wastes of geological time. It is kindled," "its store of energy bursts again into flame, and a" "civilisation such as the world has never seen" "springs into being, with the sunlight of a hundred" "million years ago augmenting its own!" * And so I bumped into my lamp-post—and very humbly said, "My God," seeing Christ in the heart of coal.

And it does not matter which of this long series of gifts you select to think out, anything will do from a book to a broadcasting plant, you will always come back to that meaning, they all mean Love. The driving force which sets a musician composing, or an artist painting, is the same as that which sets the inventor thinking, sets the chemist discovering; and it is the same as that which set the first men speaking and painfully writing—it is the Spirit of Love working out His purpose of unity. There are diversities of

* Soddy. "Science and Life," p. 111.

gifts, but the same spirit that worketh all in all—the Spirit of Unity—which is Love. The purpose of community palpably and clearly runs through all God's gifts to man, and it is that purpose which is the meaning of man's development, the development which is crowned and consummated in the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who brought with Him the perfect community Life, that is the Eternal Life. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have Everlasting Life"; and that Everlasting Life is proclaimed by the whole process of creation, as well as by Christ Himself, to be a community life, to be the Kingdom of God.

It is St. Paul, the supposed individualist, who sings the song of Charity, and declares that without it there is no life—declares definitely that asceticism, martyrdom, and the uttermost sacrifice are perfectly useless without Love, the Love that suffers long and is kind, that does not boast, and is not overbearing. And in the name of all the saints, what meaning has this Love outside of a community? How could a hermit exercise kindness and forbearance, and resist temptation to pride? It is St. John, who is supposed to have outgrown the Kingdom, who says roundly, that if a man says he loves God and does not love his brother, he is a liar; and who declares that a man who sees his brother in need, and does not feed him, cannot love him.

The truth is that no early Christian writer shows any signs of having been bitten by the mad dog of unbalanced individualism; I doubt if any one of them could have conceived of individual progress apart from the beloved community. Growth in and through the beloved community is everywhere one of the essentials of Christianity. The life of St. Paul

becomes a hopeless enigma, if you try to imagine it as a battle between the flesh and the spirit, with the object of saving his own soul; it loses all its glory and its meaning, if you take out of it that which came upon him daily, the care of all the Churches, and the conception, which was his very life-blood, of the Catholic Church. The name of the Kingdom may be used less frequently, but the idea of it is always the same, the Eternal Life is always and everywhere community life. The idea of individuals as separately existing entities, who make a contract with another entity called society, and attain to freedom by compromise of rights, is a shallow and badly-founded falsehood, from which the inspiration of our Lord protected all New Testament writers.

The Christian community or Kingdom of God is the ever-present truth about the world, the eternal meaning of all temporal things; and yet, from the human point of view, it is an apparently slow and painful growth, much of which we can actually trace. Man's inventions are not creations, they are, as we have seen, rather the casting-off of errors than the creation of truth. What from our view-point looks like the gradual creation of a material unity in the world is, from another view-point—and that the truer view-point—merely the gradual revelation of eternal unity in God; and it is that unity which is the meaning of the great machine.

There may be an uncomfortable amount of truth in Disraeli's cynical saying that—"the European talks of progress, because by means of a few scientific discoveries he has created a society which mistakes comfort for civilisation." But because we have mistaken the meaning of the gifts which God has poured upon us within the last hundred years, that does not mean that they have no meaning; nor can the

Christian religion be true in any sense that matters unless the meaning of them can be found in Christ.

I cannot regard the industrial revolution, and the gift to man of mechanical power, as being what men call "merely material" progress. I don't know what "merely material" means—I don't really believe there is such a thing. The great machine is either the gift of God, or the invention of the devil. If it is the gift of God, it is not "merely material," it is sacramental. If it is the invention of the devil, it is not "merely material," it is positively evil. In the one case it has a meaning, and must be used; in the other case it has none, and must be destroyed. I find myself sadly agreeing with Dr. Austin Freeman that—"Mechanism, by its reaction on man and his environment, is antagonistic to human welfare. It has destroyed industry, and replaced it by mere labour. It has degraded and vulgarised the works of man. It has destroyed social unity, and replaced it by social disintegration and class antagonism, to an extent which directly threatens civilisation. It has injuriously affected the structural type of society, by developing its organisation at the expense of the individual . . . and finally, by its reaction on the activity of War, it constitutes an agent for the wholesale destruction of man and his works, and the extinction of human culture."

All that is largely true of machinery, as we see it and use it now, but it is not God's Truth about machinery. These machines, I believe, are God's and come from God. The inventor is just as much inspired by God as the poet or the prophet: in both, the Word of God takes flesh. God is just as much present in a cotton loom as He is in a verse of Isaiah—He is the meaning of both. The poet and

the prophet are not always conscious of the full meaning of the words they write. Often, they are groping after an idea, which they cannot grasp or fully comprehend; and only on the eyes of after-ages does the vision, that they sought to express, shine out in all the glory and completeness of a universal truth. So it was with the inventors. They were not fully conscious of the meaning of the words which they were writing in flying wheels, in bars of iron and of steel; they did not understand what they were doing; they were groping in the dark, with the call of the Creator always in their hearts, and His power urging them on.

Always the prophet has his persecutors, and the inventors have had theirs. As the words of the prophet were taken and twisted out of their meaning, and distorted from their truth, so the scientist and inventor have seen the truth and beauty and order, which they produced, exploited and misused by men with mean minds, and stunted souls. They have had to stand by and see these gifts of God taken and misused for completely selfish ends. As Professor Soddy says in his "Science and Life": "The exploiters of the wealth of the world are not its creators; if they were, they might have a wider view than that it was created for the competitive acquisition of the most rapacious, unscrupulous, and already too well-equipped. The actual state of the world at home and abroad, in regard to industry, politics, social conditions and relationships, is surely an indictment of the rule of the possessive and acquisitive, more powerful than any judge could frame." Our fathers persecuted the prophets, and it is now high time that we, their sons, began to build them decent tombs. *Si monumentum quaeris circumspice.* If you want to see their tombs, look around you. We ought

to be able to say that, but we cannot; the world, as it is, is no fitting tomb for these great men—the scientists and inventors—it is blasphemy upon their memory.

We have mistaken the meaning of the machinery, and have not grasped what God is saying to us through it, and to what He is calling us by this new gift. What has been called the materialist interpretation of history, contains a large element of truth. Ruskin and Karl Marx were both right in their belief that the problem of machinery is the great problem of modern times, and that we shall only make true progress as it is solved. The saying of Marx, that the great factor dominating and controlling large social changes, is the power and action of tools, is very largely true. Of course it is not the whole truth. A man is not solely governed, nor his conduct solely determined, by the desire to satisfy his material needs and the means he adopts to secure that satisfaction. Yet there is nothing which affects our individual and social life so deeply, as our work and the circumstances under which we do it; and in the main, the world's work has—except for a chosen few—been the getting of its bread. It is, of course, perfectly true, as Bernstein says, that he who to-day employs the materialist theory of history is bound to employ it in its most developed, and not its original form—*i.e.*, he is bound, in addition to the development and influences of the productive forces, and the conditions of production, to make full allowance for the ideas of law and morals, the historical and religious traditions of every epoch, the influences of geographical and other circumstances of Nature, to which also the nature of man and his spiritual disposition, belong. But this is not a denial in any way of the doctrine, for *over every one of these things, laws, morals, customs,*

religious traditions, and even innate dispositions, man's work and the way in which that work is done, have a powerful influence for good or evil.

The ordinary reply to the materialist interpretation, which is made by professing Christians, simply does not touch the heart of the question at all. To say, as is often said, that every martyr, by virtue of his free choice, is a denial of an economic reading of history, is pure nonsense. To begin with, the economic interpretation of history is not concerned with the conduct of individuals, but with the conduct of man in the mass. Moreover, a martyrdom, which is free and nobly motived in itself, may yet be a response to economic pressure. Nurse Cavell was a martyr, and the immediate cause of her martyrdom was War, but behind the war there was the crushing pressure of the great machine producing economic conditions which made war almost inevitable. Even the early Christian martyrdoms, if we could trace their history out in full, might prove to have had economic causes. The fear of a slave revolt might lead an Emperor to persecute, just as the fear of a rebellion among the natives may cause British residents in an eastern land to detest missionaries to-day. The British Imperialist will compose for his own satisfaction, and that of his neighbours, countless excellent reasons for his hatred, but the ultimate cause will be his vested interest in cheap labour. Anyone can invent the most excellent arguments to justify a course of action which will increase his income. Most of us keep the devil in our pockets. This much is certain, there is nothing which influences our lives with such subtle persistence as the means by which we get our daily bread. Our economic status may not absolutely determine, but does intimately enter into, and condition, every instinct, sentiment, and passion, every thought and

theory, every system of law or philosophy to which the mind of man gives birth.

Where Marx is wrong is not in his emphasis on the importance of material conditions, but in his assumption that man is only capable of one response to their pressure. The reason why man has survived, and become dominant upon this planet, lies, biologically speaking, in his superior power of adaptation to new conditions, and to say that man can only make one response to the economic pressure due to the great machine, is to throw away the hope that biology affords us. If we were only animals we would inevitably respond to economic pressure, as Marx said we would, by "tyranny" and the "class war," that is, we would make the natural instinctive response; but, being men, we may hope to make, not a primitive and instinctive, but a civilised and rational response to our new environment. We may hope to discern the real meaning of the great machine, and act accordingly. It must be conceded to Marx that, up to now, our response has been largely instinctive and irrational, and has resulted in much, though not in all, that he prophesied proving true. But the true Christian reply to the materialist conception of History is the Sacramental Conception, in which we see God working His purpose out, in, and through the material environment.

We must not be so afraid of the word "materialism" that we go off at a tangent from the real truth. Philosophic materialism teaches that matter is something in itself apart from spirit, and that is a lie. Matter is nothing, either good or evil, in itself; it is always what we make of it and see through it. The truest view of evolution does not lead us to look upon the environment as a dead thing to the weight of which the living organism has to respond, it rather

leads us to look upon the environment as itself a live and changing thing, actively urging upon, and calling for response from, the living creature. That is precisely how we are bound to look upon the industrial revolution. The machines are alive, alive with the life of God, and through them He is urging upon, and calling for response from us, His children. At present, it is true, we do not hear or understand His call; and to many His voice sounds more like a threat of disaster, than an invitation to joy.

The whole series of inventions which make up the industrial revolution have had two main effects, viz., the conquest of space and the conquest of time; and this double conquest has resulted in the fact that the world grows smaller and smaller every day. It is as though, within the last hundred years, the whole habitable globe had been completely encircled by two vast arms, and those arms were slowly but steadily closing upon mankind, drying up the seas, boring the mountains, bridging the rivers, lightening the darkness, overcoming the storm, breaking down barriers of every description, and relentlessly forcing us all, nations, classes and individuals, on to the top of one another. This process, with its stupendous and unfathomable social and spiritual effects, is the work of God through the great machine.

It is, of course, ridiculous to suppose that people who travel sixty miles an hour are ten times as civilised as those who travel six; but it is equally ridiculous to blind oneself to the profound and far-reaching effect upon mankind of the power to travel sixty and one hundred and twenty miles an hour, and to transmit messages with almost the speed of light. I do not think that there is a single department of human life, whether it be poetry, art, religion, politics, sex-life, home life, and spiritual life, which has not been

profoundly affected by this tremendous change. Someone said to me the other day, that, to him, the arms seemed like the tentacles of an octopus relentlessly crushing mankind into a herd of stampeding, fighting animals, destroying freedom, life and beauty, and bathing the world in blood. And, indeed, there is much in the modern world which would lead us to think of it like that.

Nationalism—which is undoubtedly one of the great results of the pressure of the great machine, and is one of the outstanding features of European history during the nineteenth century—has its terrible side. In spite of Aristotle, it is not really true to say that man is a social animal; he is not naturally social, he is naturally gregarious—a very different thing—he goes in herds. And the first effect of the conquest of time and space through the great machine is to make the herds larger, and, the second, to make them more fiercely antagonistic one to another as the great arms press them into a smaller and smaller space, and, as it were, compel them to live together. The nations that are grown up like mushrooms all over Europe during the last century are really toadstools; and, unless their very nature can be changed, will poison and not purify the life of mankind. At present, nations are herds of animals, with armies and navies as their teeth and claws; and, as the pressure of the arms grows greater, every now and then they stampede and fly at one another's throats; and when they are not doing that, their policy largely consists in getting ready to do it. I think it would be true to say that three-quarters of what we call patriotism was herd-instinct and fear combined, though the rest may be the sublimest heroism. At any rate, it is perfectly certain that, if we don't look out, this patriotism —like the moon in Bairnsfather's picture—will

be the very death of us, however beautiful it may be in itself.

I am bound to confess that it does look like cruelty, to thrust the nations, with their different heritages, different traditions, and varying capacities, into a space so confined that they cannot get away from one another. It looks like cruelty, and it has had cruel results. It seems to be driving the world mad, mad with a kind of obscene and unnatural madness which sweeps over millions of people at a time, and renders them temporarily not responsible for their actions, so that a gentle and kindly people can, for awhile, be transformed into absolute devils. Everywhere there are signs that mankind is feeling the relentless pressure of those arms ; it does seem a terrible process, and to see the coming of the Kingdom of God in the movement might, at first sight, appear to be madness. But, after all, is the process any more terrible than the rest of the creative processes have been, and does not God always seem terrible to those who know Him not ? Is not that the secret of the difference between the Old and the New Testaments ? Of the same God was it said, " For all that His anger is not turned away but His arm is stretched out still," and " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do "—of the same God, Whose Face is as grim as the Garden of Gethsemane, but Whose heart is as tender as Easter Day.

> Thou, with strong prayer and very much entreating,
> Willest be asked, and Thou will answer then,
> Show the hid heart behind creation beating,
> Smile with kind eyes and be a Man with Men.

To those who know not God, His advent is always a day of wrath, but that is only because they do not know Him ; and Jesus came that henceforth we

might know Him—for He that hath seen Him hath seen the Father.

But we have not seen Jesus, and we have not seen the Father, and that's where the trouble is. What we have to fear is not God—we have to fear what we have got, which is life without God, or hell. There is hell in Central Europe, and there will inevitably be hell all over the world, unless we can see God, and discern His purpose in the great machine, so that the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ. The pressure of the everlasting arms never ceases, and we cannot turn it back, and to resist it as we are doing now is the surest road to hell.

Apart from Christ and one's faith in Him as the ultimate reality of life, our plight would seem to be desperate indeed. But the Light still shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot swallow it up.

> For life, with all it yields of Joy and Woe,
> And hope and fear, believe the aged friend,
> Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love,
> How Love might be, hath been indeed, and is,
> And that we hold henceforth to the uttermost
> Such prize despite the envy of the world.

That is what the Kingdom of God always is—a new opportunity, a fresh chance offered to mankind of the prize of learning Love, of perfecting and arriving at the fulness of community-life. And that is what this new machine world is—that is what it quite inevitably and palpably is.

In the factory, where labour is not only divided but elaborately sub-divided, and men are knit into an interdependence of inevitable co-operation from which they cannot escape: in the Council chamber, where diverging and apparently incompatible interests face one another: at a thousand and one Conferences, in

parliaments and legislative assemblies—men are striving, and struggling with travail, to learn a new kind of Love which is yet as old as Christ. They are being made to do it under the pressure of the everlasting arms. The Father is training His children—training them by setting them new and terrible tasks. It is a stern process, bringing out all the powers we possess, and compelling us to call on God for more. It demands all the energy we can put into it. It is full of novel and bewildering temptations, and makes possible colossal and cataclysmic disasters. It is a part of our pilgrimage which leads us close by the jaws of hell, and apart from God and the Spirit of His Christ we must inevitably fall therein.

Unless we can rid ourselves of fear, and, discerning God behind it, throw ourselves upon this new world with a full and courageous faith in Him, and complete self-surrender to His will, there must be years of agony for us to face. At present we are all fighting God, struggling to get free of the everlasting arms. The world is like a bird in the hand of a loving friend who only wants to help ; but in its terror of the hand that closes round it, it struggles, and frets, and wears away its strength. Food there is in plenty, but the bird is terrified and will not eat—it wants to get away from God, but

> Still with unhurrying chase,
> And unperturbèd pace,
> Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
> Come on the following Feet,
> And a Voice above their beat—
> "Naught shelters thee, who wilt not shelter Me."

That is the call that comes through the thunder of our million modern wheels. The endeavour to work out the problems of the new community, apart from real religion and communion with God, is as hopeless

and as futile as the effort to make bricks without straw. Unless there can come into our lives a power which can purge our passions, calm our fears, allay our suspicions, and destroy our greed, the everlasting arms will always seem like the tentacles of an octopus crushing life and beauty out of the world.

Everywhere there is a continual clash between the economic and political mind, and everywhere the clash spells disaster. The economic mind is founded more or less upon facts, and is an attempt to get into touch with reality, and see things as they are. The political mind is founded on God knows what, and never comes anywhere near reality. It is made up of passion, prejudice, fear, herd-instinct, and the whole of the animal that survives in man. The political mind sees the world as made up of sovereign independent nations, protected against one another by armies and navies, and bound to maintain their "prestige" and "national honour"; and within those nations it sees independent persons, and independent classes who can do what they like with their own, within certain limits. The economic mind sees none of these things. It perceives quite clearly that a sovereign independent nation is not a fact, but a political fiction; that independent persons and classes alike are perfectly impossible; and that the world is *a unity of mutual service and exchange, depending for its very life upon the rapidity and ease with which that exchange can be accomplished.* Thus the economic mind is at one with the religious as we expect it to be. There cannot be any ultimate conflict between the two. It is because the world is "a unity of mutual service and exchange, depending for its very life upon the rapidity and ease with which that exchange can be accomplished," that we must seek and see in it first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness, if all

these things—food, raiment, and fulness of life—are to be added to us. From the economic and the religious point of view, the whole political outlook upon the world is just sheer insanity—as indeed it is—having no relation to fact whatsoever. It results in the insane endeavour to make the political and the economic units of independence coincide, and so create a self-sufficient nation or a self-sufficient empire—which is the form of this lunacy most prevalent and most popular in England. The War was caused by Germany's effort to make a self-sufficient Germany; the present European chaos is largely caused by France's effort to make a self-sufficient France; and God knows what misery we shall cause if we try to make a self-sufficient Britain.

The whole miserable, tragic farce, is an effort to escape from God, and is utterly futile. What we have got to do is to bring the political mind into harmony with the economic, and that cannot be done by reasoning—it cannot be done by mere intellectual education. Gustave le Bon is right. It is only in the books of the Professors that history is governed by reason. As long as passion, prejudice, fear, and suspicion remain in the under-world of the mind, unpurged and unpurified, reason and economic argument will flow over the nations like water over a duck's back. Trying to cure Europe of its present miseries by mere information and intellectual education is like trying to cure a man suffering from peritonitis by giving him a new pair of pyjamas. The only hope is in something that goes deeper than the reason, and purges and purifies that under-world of man's irrational self. The primitive passions must be opposed by, and overcome by, a purer passion of greater power—a passion for God and His humanity, which is true religion.

That, you say, will take a million years—but will it? It is as far off, and as near, as we believe it to be. Its distance can only be measured in miles of belief or unbelief. "Say ye not, that there are yet four months unto the Harvest? but I say unto you, Lift up your eyes and look upon the fields, for they are white already to harvest!" What seems to us the long and painful process of the industrial revolution, will seem to our children, looking back upon it, to be a sudden apocalypse. History is like that—like a great river which flows on for ages in the darkness, and those who gaze thereon cannot tell whither it flows, but every now and then there come lightning flashes, and in a moment—a moment which may last a hundred years—we see the rolling of the waters, and whither they are going. We see the Son of Man coming in glory with His holy angels round Him, and realise that we have come to a crisis, a day of judgment, and that there is presented to us a choice, that choice 'twixt Heaven and Hell which the prophets always saw as the ultimate reality of life, and which Christ re-emphasised and proclaimed anew.

Such an apocalypse the industrial revolution actually is, and it presents to us individually and corporately, in an urgent and imperative form, that choice. If we fail to take this new chance of learning the Love that breaks down barriers of race, nationality, class, self-interest, passion, pride and prejudice—which burns up bitterness and hatred in the Pentecostal fires of God's Spirit—we must inevitably fall into the chaos of life without God. If we can take the opportunity, it means not merely peace and material prosperity, it means a new richness and fulness of life, a realisation in the concrete of the Universal Beauty, Goodness, and Truth. It means the Kingdom of God.

Karl Marx was right when he heard the great machines calling; but he was wrong because he did not understand their call. He was right in thinking that they had a message for mankind, but he was wrong as to what that message was. That is why there can be no truce between Christ and Marxian Communism. They are rival religions. It is not as the author of an economic theory that Marx still lives. As an economist he is dead, but, as the founder of a fanatical religion, he still lives with power. He appeals to the primitive instincts of mankind, as the heathen religions do, and relies for the driving force of his revolution upon those instincts. Class consciousness is just the instinct of the herd, a cruel, irrational, non-moral force, which, in itself, can destroy anything, but create nothing. *Man may not be fully rational yet, but his only hope of salvation lies in his effort to become rational,* and therefore anything which tends to play down to his baser passions, and use his instincts as power in their raw state, is the devil. That is why Christ and Karl Marx are as fire and water, and cannot mix. He is a literal blasphemer, a slanderer of God, because he interprets the call of Love as the call of hate. Through the thunder of the great machines, through the humming of the engines, through the panting of a million motor-cars, through the pulse and throb of the screws that drive our monster ships across the sea, God is calling. "I beseech you therefore, brethren,"
"walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are"
"called, with all lowliness, meekness, and long-"
"suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavour-"
"ing to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of"
"peace; for there is one Body—(that vast new"
"body that the machine has made)—and there must"
"be one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope"

" of your calling—one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, " " one Lord and Father of all, Who is above all, " " through all, and in you all."

That is the call, and to that call we must respond ; at our peril do we allow our religion to mean less than this. We must not be turned from the main belief by those who, disbelieving in God, would endeavour to lay another foundation for human hope, than that which has been laid in Jesus Christ our Lord ; who would seek salvation along any of the roads which He rejected ; who put their trust in legislation, political reorganisation, or the mere redistribution of our present poverty. Nor yet by those who, making pretence of a spirituality which goes beyond the Incarnation, would bid us seek " a purely spiritual " salvation, as individuals, apart from the body of which we are living members. We must be frightened neither by those who put their trust in the outward and visible sign without the inward and spiritual grace, nor by those who put their trust in the inward and spiritual grace without the outward and visible sign, neither by those who believe in concrete Goodness apart from God, nor by those who believe in God apart from concrete Goodness. Our constant prayer must be nothing less than this : Thy Kingdom come on earth as it has in Heaven. So will the Eternal Truth of the Kingdom come to birth from our travail, in perfect Beauty, and flame like an apocalypse from Heaven.

Not where the wheeling systems darken,
  And our benumbed conceiving soars !—
The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
  Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.

The angels keep their ancient places :—
  Turn but a stone, and start a wing !
'Tis ye, 'tis your estrangèd faces,
  That miss the many-splendoured thing.

But (when so sad thou canst not sadder)
  Cry ;—and upon thy sore loss
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder,
  Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross.

Yea, in the night, my Soul, my daughter,
  Cry,—clinging Heaven by the hems ;
And lo, Christ walking on the water
  Not of Gennesareth, but Thames !

—*Francis Thompson.*

Thy Will be done. No greater words than these
Can pass from human lips, than these which rent
Their way through agony and bloody sweat,
And broke the silence of Gethsemane
To save the world from sin.

THE greatest of all words; and yet they can mean nothing or worse than nothing, and often do. A cloud of false teaching surrounds them; all sorts of lies have been told in their name; all manner of evils have been tolerated under their protection; they have provided disguise for the most damnable cant, and the most devilish superstition; they have been, and are, the watchwords of fatalism—and faith and fatalism are like fire and water, the one is the death of the other. Fatalism is not religion, it is the absence of it. The animal man is a fatalist, made up of sloth, fear, false pride, and self-deception; and he cannot be saved, he can only be re-created, born again. To say "Thy Will be done," may either mean that you have found God and love Him with all your heart, or that you know nothing of God whatsoever. Many a man feels like Browning's Paracelsus, when he hears religious, or apparently religious, people talking about the Will of God.

"Now, 'tis this I most admire—
The constant talk men of your stamp keep up
Of God's will, as they style it; one would swear

Man had but merely to uplift his eye,
And see the will in question charactered
On heaven's vault. 'Tis hardly wise to moot
Such topics : doubts are many and faith is weak.
I know as much of any will of God's,
As knows some dumb and tortured brute what Man,
His stern lord, wills from the perplexing blows
That plague him every way ; but there, of course,
Where least he suffers, longest he remains—
My case ; and for such reasons I plod on,
Subdued, but not convinced."

That's just how it is with lots of us. We are like cows driven to market. I often see them pass my window here, and think how like they are to men, staggering on in a herd to their death in a state of muddled stupidity, being beaten, first on this side and then on that, to keep them in the narrow way—always seeking to get away from that stick, and always running into it. That's what thousands of men feel like.

"The years, like great black oxen, tread me down,
And God the Herdsman goads them on behind,
And I am trampled by their passing feet."
—*W. B. Yeats.*

According to men's temperament, they say "Thy Will be done," with a grin, a grunt, or a sigh, but neither grins, grunts, nor sighs can transform agnosticism into faith, or blasphemy into religion ; and at best this way of saying the great words is agnosticism, while at worst it is a blasphemy, a slander upon God. At best, it is a submission to the typically Victorian proposal of Herbert Spencer to divide the world into two departments, the known and the unknown, and to keep the known for science, and hand over the unknown to religion ; so that every advance in man's knowledge would mean that the Kingdom of God grew less.

That is a proposal which would mean death both to science and religion. To identify God with the unknown kills religion straight away, for the essence of religion is the knowledge of God ; and it would mean the slow poisoning of science, because it contaminates the roots of reason by undermining our faith in the ultimate reasonableness of the world in which we live. It means that we despair of ever arriving at our true relation, as parts, to the universe, which is the whole. It puts an end to sound thought, and, therefore, to vigorous action. It is disastrous to identify God with the evils of life, with the incomprehensible limitations of our best hopes and aspirations, with pestilences, famines, disasters, diseases—everything which cannot be cured and must therefore be endured. It is blasphemy ; but it is a very common blasphemy, both in the study and in the street ; and in both it does unlimited damage.

I can remember sitting by the bedside of a small child painfully dying of rickets and general debility ; and the mother, a large, fat woman, copiously weeping the tears of sentimentality which are easily shed and easily dried, kept on saying, " It's God's Will." But I never knew anything which was less God's Will than that. The whole business was just smothered in sin, and denial of God's Will. The cottage in which the child lay was an abominable and shameful place, in which no decent animal ought to have been asked to live, the whole district was an outrage on humanity. The father of the child was syphilitic, and I knew the mother had suckled the child in drink. It was typical modern poverty ; and that is not God's Will, it is the devil's will.

For many months I attended a self-centred neurasthenic girl, a regular hypochondriac, who suffered from every disease under heaven except

housemaid's knee, and she only escaped that because she never worked. She was waited on hand and foot by an adoring sister, and round her neck she always wore a cross on which was written, *Fiat Voluntas Tua.* And was it God's Will? Not a bit of it; it was evil, it was the absence of God; it was because she was entirely selfish, always had been unconsciously, and therefore dangerously selfish. She was cured by God. The Doctor said she was dying, and she might have died if she had not found God, but He cured her. That sort of business cannot live with Him, any more than cotton-wool can live with a burning fiery furnace. The whole of her religion had been a denial of God from start to finish.

I can remember, in 1915, before I set out to France, a weeping and distracted mother running in to me to tell me that Ronald had been killed—blown to pieces up in Ypres—and asking me if that was God's Will, and I said, "No, ma'am, certainly not, it is the result of evil, it is the result of the concentration of all the evils in hell and earth. It is no more God's Will, than the Cross was God's Will. We must not confuse the Christ with the Cross. Look upon that broken—battered—bleeding body and you see what sin is, it is as ugly and as shameful as that; look upon the Majesty of the Christ Spirit, revealed in His words and conduct on the Cross, and you see that which conquers and destroys sin—in Him you see the Will of God. If the Cross was God's Will, then cruelty, treachery, cowardice, base ingratitude, and mob-madness are the Will of God. Those evils were the cause of the Cross, and those evils were the cause of this cursed War. Ronald was a good boy, he lived clean and died clean. His courage, his self-sacrifice, his tenderness to you, those were God's Will; his death was God's woe, as it is yours. It is in the Christ, not in the Cross, that

you see the Will of God. It is in the Christ Who died for our sins, nay, rather who rose for our justification—and it is in the Ronald who was slain for the world's sin, and who lives for ever with the Christ, that you see revealed God's Will."

That is the point which we have to get fixed first of all. God never wills, nor can will, evil to anyone, anywhere, at any time. God is, has been, and always will be, pure undiluted, unmitigated Beauty, Goodness, and Truth—Infinite Love. Nothing in the world must make you compromise about that. You cannot live, and you cannot think rightly, until you grasp that and hold tight to it. That is the truth which you have to hold by force of faith in the teeth of doubt, steadfastly denying whatever appears to contradict it, denying the world's denial of God's Love. You will always be an ox driven to market, not a man or woman climbing to Heaven, unless, and until, you lay hold upon the truth that God is Love and nothing else.

I remember a man, who had an abscess which formed and re-formed in the region of his sciatic nerve—and who was told by a very conscientious priest in gold spectacles that it was the Will of God—saying to me that he found it very difficult to love God under these circumstances. And that's just it. It is not merely cowardice, it is not merely that you cannot love God because He hurts you; but because, if you identify God with pain or with any disease, you identify Him with what, in your bones, in the instinctive "innards" of yourself, you know to be evil. You identify His Will with something which you know you must attempt to fight and destroy; and so you introduce a conflict right into the very centre of your soul. You make nonsense of your whole life; and what is more, you make

nonsense of the life of Christ, Who spent a very large, if not the larger part of His time, in healing the sick and diseased. It never occurred to Him, apparently, that disease was the Will of God; He had only one message for it, and that was "I will, be thou clean. Arise, take up thy bed and walk." And, as we have seen, the Name of God is Jesus, and the Will of God is the Will of Jesus—He that hath seen Him hath seen the Father.

You must not start off on the old tack of creating a God out of your own imagination—an absolutely powerful, absolutely loving, absolutely wise, and absolutely-everything-else person, with no relation to anything—and then endeavour to fit Christ into Him. Apart from Jesus, to the making of gods there is no end; and most of them are devils. God, Who commanded the light to shine out of the darkness, has shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ; and He had nothing to do with causing evil of any description whatsoever. He came not to destroy but to fulfil—not to condemn but to redeem. There is not, in the life of Jesus, any trace at all of the perverted love of pain. He was, apparently, always perfectly healthy and robust; a Man so overflowing with vitality that there was nothing for disease to lay hold upon, either in His Body or His Mind. And that is the Will of God to us. The Will of God is man's perfection—his perfection in body and soul; the two cannot be separated in this life, nor, as far as we know, in any other. They are not two things, but two aspects of one thing; God has joined them together and we cannot put them asunder. God's Will is man's perfection, and nothing else, as far as we are concerned.

Whence then comes evil? you ask. Why are there diseases and disasters? Why is the cry of the

world so constantly a cry of pain ? Well, the problem of evil is insoluble, it is the one really and finally insoluble problem in the world. The Bible throws no light on it whatsoever, Satan comes into the Garden of Eden from no one knows where. To believe in a personal devil does not help a scrap, it only puts the problem one step farther back. All attempts to solve the problem are doomed to failure from the start. Whole libraries have been written about it, and we are no nearer the truth now than we were before men could write. Personally, I am rather relieved than troubled about that. It seems to me that the man who solved the problem of evil would prove that there was no God ; because, you see, anyone who solved the problem would make evil a reasonable thing—that is what solving the problem would mean, it would mean fitting evil somehow into a rational scheme of things. If you could understand evil, it would be reasonable. You cannot understand anything that is not reasonable. You cannot make sense out of nonsense, or interpret the speech of an idiot. If you could understand evil, it would be rational, and therefore it would be a part of God—and, being part of God, would be eternal, and then you could never get rid of it, and that would be an awful prospect. The essence of evil is that it is not rational, and therefore not understandable ; it cannot be brought into harmony with any philosophy of things. Our business with it is, not to explain, but to destroy it.

Some people try to explain it by saying that you could not have good without evil ; but surely that means either that you deny the existence of God, or make His existence dependent upon that of the devil. The basic truth of the Christian faith is, that we believe good to be the one self-existent and eternal thing. It is quite true that evil is dependent on good—

it is the counterfeit of good—but it is not true that good is dependent upon evil. It is quite possible to have love without hatred, truth without falsehood, beauty without ugliness. To make good merely the opposite of evil, is a desperate defence of God, which reduces itself at last to the denial of His existence in any sense that matters. Men tell us that evil is necessary to the existence of the moral struggle, and that the moral struggle is a good thing in itself; but if the Christian faith be true, the moral struggle is not a good thing in itself. The true state of man is to be beyond good and evil, to be "dead unto sin and alive unto righteousness"; and if you are dead unto sin, and the words have any meaning at all, it means that for you evil is no longer a reality, and the conflict is at an end, because you know evil for what it is—a lie, something which pretends to the power to oppose God, and which will enslave you as long as you believe in, submit to, and trust in it—but no longer.

The conflict is not a good thing in itself; that is the teaching both of Christianity, and of all modern psychological discovery. God knows how much wasted, ruined, life is to be laid at the door of the teaching which glorifies conflict and bids men oppose evil by the force of what they call their will. It is a hopeless conflict. "The good that I will to do, I do not; the evil that I will not to do, that I do; O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" That is the moral struggle; mere morality is always a struggle. But you must not confuse religion with morality. The cry of morality is "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" the cry of religion is "Thanks be to God Who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ Our Lord." Religion begins where mere morality ends. That is the whole inner meaning of St. Paul's epistles,

and indeed of the entire Christian experience. Man is not saved by works, but by faith; he is not saved by morality, but by religion, by actual communion with God. He is saved, in so far as he actually lives in the world where God is, a world in which there is no evil. He is redeemed, so far as he lays hold of the eternal life—and in that life evil has no place, and is not a reality. And the Will of God for us is, that we have eternal life.

If I say that evil is finally unreal, I do not fall into the pit of the Pantheist and say that evil is good. The Pantheist—who believes that everything is God, and that God is everything—tries to worship the universe as he knows it; he tries to adore violets and vermin, small-pox and sunsets, war and Westminster Abbey in one breath, and say that all are equally God, and that is not a creed, it's a caricature. Nor am I bitten with the madness of the Antinomian—an entirely insane person who says that, inasmuch as the soul is entirely separate from the body, you can do exactly what you please and still get to heaven in the end. Both of these, in their effort to explain evil, explain it away; but I merely cling fast to the truth that all real things were made by God, and that without Him was not anything made that was made; that He simply did not and could not make anything evil, and that therefore, to the man who is in communion with God, evil is not real. I do not see any way in which I can escape from the logic of that, and I don't want to find a way.

There are some who hold that unless you believe in a personal devil you cannot be a Christian, but, thank God, belief in a personal devil has never been *de fide*—necessary to salvation. The truth behind the doctrine of a personal devil appears to be this, that evil is not inherently part of the nature of man, nor of

the universe which God made—that it comes into it from outside, so to speak. And that is true, though where evil comes from nobody even pretends to know. It is this very fact, that evil is finally unreal and untrue, that the belief in the devil, who is the father of lies, is meant to protect and express. Of course, to deny the reality of evil to those who live without God, and to those of us who are only beginning to know Him, would be to deny plain facts. It's no good telling a drunkard that his desire for whisky is not real to him, when it is the only reality of which he is conscious at all; and yet, as you, who are sober, look at his mind, you know that it is a jumble and tissue of lies like the mind of a madman. It is no good saying to the boy who is out in the streets with the old gods calling round him, that the lusts of the flesh are unreal to him; and yet you know, if you are in touch with God, that his mind, which believes that the joy of life lies in the lust of the flesh, is an absolute and utter unreality, a lie from summit to base; and there is no way of redemption for him save his being brought into the light by which he can see the lie in all its utter falsehood. There is no evil in the world in which God lives; and that is the world which is the truth of this, and into which, by God's Grace, walking along the way of worship and communion, I have to enter—until I can cry, "It is no longer I that live, but God that liveth in me."

We are obliged to talk about God and about spiritual things in human language, because we have no other language in which to talk; and it is not easy to define exactly what we mean by the will either of God or of man. We talk about ourselves as being divided into thought, feeling, and will; and it is a convenient division, for purposes of accurate analysis, but it certainly is not true to

fact; and if it is not true of us, it is still less true of God. You cannot divide will from thought and feeling, for no one can will anything unless he thinks and feels. What appears to be the battle between will and desire in us, is really a battle between two or more desires, and in the end the dominant desire wins. The will of a man ultimately resolves itself into his master-passion, and if he has no master-passion he has not, as a rule, any settled will. A real will is not a thing with which a man is born, it is a thing which he has to develop. He is not supplied with it, he is supplied with the material for making it; and as he succeeds in making it, he becomes a person. He may be a bad person or a good person; that depends upon whether his dominant desire is for the good, the beautiful, and the true, or for the evil, the ugly, and the false. But bad persons, men and women with a settled will to evil, are very, very rare. Bad men and women usually are bad, rather because they have no master-passion, but are torn by a conflict of many baser passions and some good ones—which intensify the conflict. When the will of a man is formed, it is the expression of what he is and knows himself to be. The Will of God is His master-passion, His dominant desire, and is the expression of what He is and knows Himself to be; and is therefore the expression of Love, for He is Love. If God willed famine, earthquakes, disease, pestilence, and war, they would be part of Him, they would be in His Heart, and they would be eternal and undestroyable; and therefore all our efforts to overcome these things would be a battle against God, and we should be landed into a hopeless contradiction, not merely in theory, but actually in practice. Any man who strove for the peace of the world would be fighting against God, and would therefore have to choose between his conscience and his

religion; a perfectly impossible position, into which false ideas of God have landed us, and may land us again.

Evil, then, must be outside of God, and cannot be part of the world as it is, but must be only in the world as we conceive it to be. It is not rational, and we cannot explain it, but we can see the lines along which it comes, and the good that it strives to counterfeit—for evil is always a counterfeit of good, it would never deceive us unless it borrowed raiment from an angel of light.

The first great blessing which God gives us, and of which evil hides the real meaning, offering us a counterfeit, is what we call Freedom. God's will for us is that we should live, with a life that is, in some mysterious sense, our own. This really means that we have the power of making God's life our own, and entering more and more fully into communion and conscious unity with Him. In Him we live and move and have our being, so far as we really live at all; and true freedom is the power to make His life our own, the power to express through our many-sided complex nature, His Beauty and Goodness and Truth. But there is a false freedom, the possibility of which is apparently inherent in, and part of, the gift of life itself; and this false freedom is the attempt to live apart from, and independent of, God; the power to live a life which is *absolutely* our own. It is an entirely false life which is really death, and the sense of freedom which it gives is not really freedom, but slavery. True freedom knows only good; false freedom knows both good and evil, and believes itself free because it can choose between the two. It is always a false choice, for there is no freedom apart from union with God. Freedom is not independence of, but conscious unity with eternal

Love. We dream of freedom through independence of God, and imagine that we can be something in ourselves entirely apart from Him. Upon that false foundation, we build up vast temples of tragedy and tears, in which we bow down before our own lusts and call them god. The possibility of this false freedom appears to exist in some measure wherever what we call "life" exists*; in the lower forms of life it issues in degeneracy and disease; in the higher forms of life in degeneracy, disease, and sin; but whether in the lower or the higher form, it is the same in essence, the attempt to be independent of God.

The Will of God is, first of all, our unity with Him in spirit and in truth, and evil first comes along the line of a break in that unity; and it issues in death, because God is our life. We can see that round us every day. We see it whenever we meet a really old man, that is, a man who is looking backwards with regret, and not forwards with hope. He is a man, very often, who has tried many gods and found them fail. His animal life is withering away, his natural vitality is decaying, and he has never laid hold upon the higher life; and so he is heading straight for death. What the end of that appalling process is, nobody knows or can know; but the process itself is as plain as can be. Whether man is immortal, or what one writer has called "immortable"—capable of obtaining immortal life—it is impossible to decide; but it is evident that, so far as this life is concerned,

* This includes what we call inanimate things. It is doubtful whether inorganic matter is really inanimate. We can see the roots of self-existence in plants—in minerals and stones it passes beyond us, but wherever there is energy there is life and inanimate nature does appear to have the power to resist God in some way or other, as it certainly has the power to resist us. Creation seems to involve the gift of self-existence, and therefore the temporary limitation of the Creator.

the great process of selection which runs through the entire history of the world is constantly at work, many are called but few chosen, all men are called to the higher life, but only a certain number of men lay hold upon it and discover its ultimate meaning. Evil is a failure to lay hold upon that life, and results from an attempt to live without God.

The broken unity between man and God is thus the first cause of evil, because God's Will is, first of all, our unity with Him; but, secondly, the Will of God is that we, being one with Him, should be one with one another—that we should be one as He is One, and that is our real inherent nature. We are one with Him and one with one another whatever we may believe ourselves to be. But along that line, too, evil comes; and we conceive of ourselves as independent of one another, as being separate, isolated centres of life set over and against our brothers. Indeed, we believe that this is the meaning of freedom —independence of our brothers—we hold this up as our highest good, we fight for it, cheat for it, lie for it. We say to ourselves that life is not worth living without it. Every war that has ever been fought, has been fought under the flag of that false freedom. As individuals, as classes, as nations, we struggle for independence, calling it "freedom"; but it is all a pitiable dream which can never become a reality. Apart from the unity of mankind, the individual man has scarcely any existence at all, certainly none of his higher capacities have any existence; if we could conceive ourselves as having been cut off from the very beginning from the vast treasury of wisdom, knowledge and beauty which mankind has accumulated, and cut off too from the knowledge of God, what was left of any one of us would be worth precious little. Our real existence depends upon, and is bound

up with, the vast whole of which we are a part; and it is this law of unity by which we grow, by a constant interaction of the whole and of the part.

Each man's life, like the life of every living thing, is a unique and solitary expression, at a single point, of the whole universe in which he lives. You go into your garden on a summer morning, and find a rose in bloom. You see there a uniquely perfect expression of the whole world in which the rose lives. It took the universe to make it; and yet it could not have been made, if there had not been some mysterious power at work within the tree itself, which could select and combine out of its universe what was necessary to make that one rose, the like of which there never has been on earth, and never will be again.

There is a world of wonder in this rose;
God made it, and His whole creation grows
To a point of perfect Beauty
In this garden plot. He knows
The poet's thrill
On this June morning, as He sees
His will
To Beauty taking form; His Word
Made flesh and dwelling among men.
All mysteries
In this one flower meet
And intertwine;
The Universal is concrete;
The human and Divine
In one unique and perfect thing are fused
Into a unity of Love,
This rose, as I behold it—
For all things gave it me—
The stars have helped to mould it,
The air, soft moonshine, and the rain,
The meekness of old mother earth,
The many-billowed sea,
The evolution of ten million years,
And all the pain
Of ages, brought it to its birth,

And gave it me,
And gave me eyes to see it as it is.
The tears
Of Christ are in it,
And His Blood
Has dyed it red.
I could not see it but for Him,
Because He led
Me to the Love of God,
From which all Beauty springs.
I and my rose
Are one.

You and your rose are one. It takes God and the world to make you, and yet neither of you could be made, if there were not the mystery of the individual Life-energy in you both, to imbibe, combine, and express the universe, in a unique way. So the great man is not the man who is independent of the world, but the man who bears the world in his heart and in his mind, and expresses it with peculiar vigour and peculiar truth. That is why Jesus Christ was perfect Man, and has set the standard of greatness for all time, because He bore the whole world in His heart, and expressed it in terms of perfect Truth and Beauty. He more than anyone that ever lived, could truly say, "Homo sum et nil humanum alienum puto." "I am a man and count nothing human as outside myself"—nothing—not even sin. He took it all into Himself—and expressed the Truth of it all. Love—His perfect Love—laid on Him the iniquity of us all, and in His Cross He expressed the truth about sin—and exposed its futility and falsehood in the light of the eternal. It took God and Man to make Him, and yet He could not have been made, if there had not been that in Him which could absorb, combine, and express both God and Man to perfection. We believe that He shall come to be our Judge. He has put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted the humble and meek. The

old type of great man, high and lifted up, great through independence, the tyrant, the dominant oppressor, the conqueror, is degraded ; we may fear him, grovel before him, we are cowards and often do, but in our hearts we do not respect him, for he is not respectable. Since Christ lived and died none but servants are respectable. You have to serve and suffer if you want to reign, henceforth all kings must be crowned with thorns, if they would be real kings. The only social position you can attain through independence is that of Bill Sykes, that is the position of all independent people however much they may disguise it. You may ride in a Rolls Royce car, and drink the nectar of the Gods, but you are in truth an underling unless you serve and love the world of men through whom you live.

The attempt to find freedom through independence is not life but suicide, which is the central soul of sin. You and I are inevitably one with every human being now on earth. We live in them and they in us, so far as we really live at all. Moreover, we are one with every human being that has ever been on earth, and one with all that shall come after us. In the living present, past and future meet, and from that unity we cannot escape except by spiritual death. I believe in the Community of Saints. Christ is the Sun, and His saints are the stars, of the spiritual world which the great man must absorb and express in his own unique individual way. That is the point of reconciliation between Catholic Authority and Protestant private judgment. Private judgment is not so much a right as a necessity, it is but another name for life, another name for the power and the necessity of absorbing, combining, and expressing as your own the mental and spiritual environment in which you live, and Authority is only another name

for that environment, another name for the accumulated experience which each life must absorb and express in its own individual way. For a man to despise or neglect that corporate experience is as fatal as it would be for a rose to throw away the sunshine or the earth. Life, true life, is just that freedom through unity which is the Will of God, and the only escape from it is death.

Yet we do try to escape. We dream that this unity fetters us ; we fret against it and seek freedom from it—and that is sin. A man whose body came to him from the past and will—in some form or other—be perpetuated into the future, thinks of it as separated from both—as belonging to himself ; and imagines that he can do as he likes with it. He is single, and tells himself that he has no children, and he proceeds to use his body as he likes. If he saw a man beating a child over the head with a bludgeon, he would probably fly at him and strangle him ; but he nevertheless proceeds to kill, by slow torture, a child that is yet unborn. That is the root-evil of lust, it is a denial of our unity with one another. When sometimes, as a parish priest, I used to go out, or send out, to fetch girls off the street, it was because I saw running beside each one a little child crying out : " What will you do with me ? " Every time I marry a couple at the altar, I see standing between them a little naked babe, with hands outstretched to both, saying, " Mummy and daddy, what are you going to do for me ? " That would be sentimental, if it did not happen to be true—strictly and carefully true. If you misuse yourself, body or soul, it is a case of attempted murder, not only of yourself, but of all mankind. It is as true of nations as it is of men. The people of a nation to-day imagine that their country belongs to them, and they therefore act as

their present interests dictate, but long after those now living are dead and gone, the nation of to-morrow will be paying for the folly of the nation of to-day.

Everywhere, in every department of life, this law of unity operates, and the only road to freedom is the recognition of it as an inevitable law of life. That is why the innocent suffer for the guilty, because they are one with the guilty in a unity that cannot be broken unless life is to be destroyed. It is not the law which is evil—the law of unity—it is our ignorance of, and disobedience to it. In itself the law is as good as God, as good as life ; it is the manifest source of all our highest joys, of all the most perfect beauty and the most lasting peace ; it is a glorious and unspeakable gift. If it makes it possible for a man to stand looking down upon a child diseased and blighted through his sin, it also makes it possible for a man to pick up in his arms a laughing healthy babe, and to know the very joy of God in His only-begotten Son. If the unity of all present here on earth makes it inevitable that all should bear the sin of each, and each should bear the sin of all, it also makes it possible that all should share the good of each, and each should share the good of all. And this is the Will of God. The desire for private Beauty, private Goodness, and private Truth is the root of all evil. And once more we see the true meaning of this vast material unity which is the characteristic of the modern world ; it is but the symbol and sacrament of our eternal unity, a sacrament through which God is seeking to set us free in the unity of interdependence. He is seeking to inspire us, that His will may be done upon earth as it is in Heaven, and that we may realise that we can only find perfect freedom in proportion as each one of us bears the whole of his world in his heart, and seeks to express it in his own unique and special way. To

attempt to break either our unity with God, or our unity with one another, is always ruinous. The individualist is courting one kind of ruin, and the secular socialist another. The individualist is seeking God apart from man, the secular socialist is seeking man apart from God; and both are seeking what does not exist.

Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality, are a trinity in unity, and in this trinity none is before or after the other. Liberty is the father, equality is the son, and fraternity is the spirit by which those three are one. Liberty is the father, because it is but another name for life—the mysterious power which every individual possesses to grow, to expand, to absorb and express more and more perfectly the world in which he lives. Equality is the son, because, unless it is reverenced and worshipped, liberty is starved and stunted and degenerates into unreal independence; it is a flower without sunshine, a root without rain, and it will wither and die. If it is to reach perfection it must take to itself all other lives, on terms of equal value, acknowledging its dependence upon, and unity with them. Liberty and equality are as necessary to one another as the tree and the soil; together they live, apart they fall and die—and fraternity is the spirit by which alone those two can co-exist. Liberty without equality leads to domination by the strong; equality without liberty leads to the tyranny of the mob; true democracy is the unity of the three, and it lives by fraternity, which is God. The individualist attempts to find liberty without equality; the secular socialist attempts to find equality without liberty; and both deny the true spirit of fraternity. Therefore both are fighting against God, and that is of all employments the most pathetically futile. There is no destiny for man apart from the will of God, which is that we may be one as He is One.

VII *Give us this day our daily Bread*

THERE is no authority for it, but it seems likely that the Lord's Prayer was born, and took form, in the wilderness, when Our Lord was driven up by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil—a strange and awful saying. Coming, as it does, at the beginning of His ministry, it looks as though that time in the wilderness was the period of solitude and silence which we find in the lives of all who have done great work in the world, the time when He went apart to think out with God the problems which His ministry presented—to fix in His own mind what was to be His purpose, His policy, and His programme, which are the essentials of any life work. The great aim and object after which it strives, which is its purpose; the principles and methods by which that purpose is to be attained, which form its policy; and the immediate action to be taken, which is its programme. And if this be true—and I believe it is—the order of the clauses in the Prayer is extraordinarily illuminating. It begins with God, as everything must—Thy Name, Thy Kingdom, Thy Will—then Our Bread, Our Sins, Our Temptations, Our Deliverance; and then, swinging back again, Thy Kingdom, Thy Power, Thy Glory. It is the order of the perfect life, and in it the next thing after God is Bread.

It is impossible to read our Lord's life without gaining the impression that this problem of the people's bread was for ever on His mind. He was no dreamer,

He was the greatest realist that ever lived, the most practical person that ever set His hand to any great work in the world; and He knew well, as the Father knows, that we have need of these things. The order of the temptations bears this out. St. Matthew and St. Luke differ in the order of the second and third, but they agree about the first, it was the problem of Bread. To suppose that it was merely the temptation to use His powers to help Himself, is to wrench the whole thing out of its context. I am driven inevitably, as I strive, in the light of the gospels, to enter into the mind of my Lord as He sits there in the wilderness, planning, thinking, praying, beset on every side with problems which called for the uttermost thought His finely-trained and beautifully-balanced intellect could give to them, as well as for all the resources of His infinite Love—I am driven to the conclusion that He was thinking out the problem of the people's Bread.

In the dim grey light of the morning, when the rocks and boulders round Him, by natural association of ideas, grew to look like loaves of bread, He was surrounded by an innumerable phantom host of the world's hungry people; for our Lord was never so close to the crowd as He was when He was away from it. He never dreamed of that futile kind of pietism which endeavours to attain communion with God, divorced from His world; He only went away from the world in order to get closer to it. And there, in the dawning light, I believe, He saw stretching out into an endless sea, the millions and millions of the world's hungry men and women; mothers clasping puny children to their shrivelled breasts; fathers tearing open their ragged shirts to show the bones beneath their skin, and stretching out lean and skinny arms in supplication; while all around Him, like the

moan of the sea, there went up the cry, "Bread! Bread! for God's sake give us Bread. If Thou be the Son of God, command these stones that they may become Bread." And He, seeing the multitude, had compassion upon them, for divers of them had come from afar, so very far, so many weary miles, through so many bitter disappointments, with broken boot-soles flapping on their feet, along miles and miles of dirty pavement, miles and miles of filthy streets. Bread, Bread, for God's sake give us Bread! It was the supreme temptation of His life, and how was He to meet it? He felt within Him the pulse of extraordinary powers. He knew that, in some strangely unique and wonderful way, He was the Man, the Son of God; and surely here was the most pressing and crying problem, here was the greatest need, to feed the people. Was it any use giving them God, unless He gave them bread? How could they worship, unless they were fed? Was it not mockery to talk to them of the Father's Love, unless He met their human need? And yet, and yet, He knew man, and needed not that any should tell Him what was in man. He knew that bread alone could never satisfy the hunger that they felt.

> Not thus can man be saved, by bread alone;
> The hunger in his heart is Infinite,
> And craves Infinity for food; the beast
> Within him thrives on bread and starves the soul,
> And this soul-hunger goads the beast, and drives
> The whole man downwards into Hell, where lusts
> And new desires wake to life, as vermin
> Breed in putrid flesh, and crawling there become
> Fat breeders of a pestilential brood
> More filthy than themselves. So fares man's soul
> That starves within a body fully fed.
> Men grow luxurious, and cruelty,
> More cruel in disguise of Beauty's robes,
> Grows callously refined, and blinds their eyes

To Love. Their lust is satiated not,
But craves the sting of grosser lusts, to prick
The jaded appetite to life. My God !
I see it all : I dare not give man bread,
Unless I give him more. He must have God—
Must learn to read God's message in the stars
Above him, and the stones beneath. His Bread
Must be to him the Body of His God,
The sacrament of fuller life, which he
Takes on his knees, and with a thankful heart
Made kind by gratitude.

Christ's intellectual balance was perfect ; and the eagle eye of His Spiritual understanding pierced to the very heart and centre of the problem, and perceived the truth which we are painfully and slowly learning—that to feed man is to starve him ; he must strive to feed himself. If the man is blest who gives without receiving, the man is cursed who receives without giving. It is our failure to perceive that, which has made Christian charity stink in the nostrils of honest men, and has caused it to become the reproach, rather than the glory and the crown, of His Church. We have been so desperately anxious to secure a moral gymnasium in which the righteous rich could exercise their souls—not by selling all and giving to the poor, but by giving away what they do not really want—that we have failed to remember the effect of their patronage upon the poor. The strong have reserved to themselves the blessing of giving without receiving, and have heaped upon the poor the curse of receiving without giving. The amount that is given away in charity in a single year in this country, or in direct relief—which is the name by which we hide our shame of charity—is positively staggering. And yet people are not fed, and by that means never will be. By Charity alone can the world be saved, but this is not charity. It tends to obscure rather than to realise the Brother-

hood of Man; it is—and thank God we increasingly feel it to be—a put-off, a refusal of the way of the Cross. It is not Christianity; it is an excuse for not being Christian.

More and more the quality of our modern mercy becomes exceeding strained. It does not drop as the gentle dew from heaven, but is screwed from the pockets of shame-faced people, uncomfortably conscious of the poverty-stricken places beneath. It is twice cursed; it curseth him that gives and him that takes, and is meanest in the mightiest, because they feel it least. It is all wrong, because it makes bread still bread alone. Organised charity is, for this reason, the very devil.

But what is the alternative? There is no alternative outside the Kingdom of God. We can never feed the people, we can never even satisfy the hunger of their bodies, until bread becomes more than bread, and we learn to see it as God sees it, *as the sacrament of the unity of mankind in Him.* The Sacrament of the Altar reveals the truth about Life. In the Blessed Sacrament we reach the Reality of Bread, and that reality is God, who is Love. Christ is the true Bread "alethinos artos"—the true meaning of all Bread. We there take Bread and consecrate it by a corporate act, and God's answer to that act is the gift of Himself, so that becoming one with Him we are made one with one another. Thus Bread which is the root cause of our divisions becomes in Him the root cause of our unity, and in the Sacrament we live the true life, live it in the sanctuary, that we may learn to live it in the street. The truly social life is the sacramental life, which consecrates to the service of God our daily bread and every means by which we win it. If we fail to perceive the social meaning of the Sacrament, we destroy its whole

nature and meaning, and that is where we have failed.

Our wrong idea of bread is all bound up with our false ideas of money; because, as mechanical civilisation advances, and the division and sub-division of labour proceeds, money tends to mean bread, and bread to necessitate money; and our view of money is all wrong.

I have for some time now, whether in sermons or in lectures, abandoned the practice of preaching from a text; partly because I believe that a text divorced from its context is often an enemy of truth, and partly because I found by experience that when I began in the ordinary conventional way, saying that in the tenth chapter of St. Luke's gospel and the fourth verse, you would find these words, people had a tendency to compose themselves as for long and uninterrupted slumber. And, although it may be a useful by-product, it is not the first intention of any discourse to act as an antidote to insomnia. Nevertheless, the experience which led men to preach from texts still persists with me; for, as I read my Bible (which I am still old-fashioned enough to do, believing it to be a very good substitute for much of our modern literature, and considerably more profitable than the *News of the World*, if only because it contains some news of a better world), every now and then some text or passage, the meaning of which I thought I understood and had exhausted, suddenly stands out before me, bathed in a new light and fraught with an entirely fresh significance. And this has been very much so lately, because my thoughts have been very largely occupied with a subject, which, for various reasons—such as Income Tax, Rates, etc.—has occupied many people's minds to the exclusion of everything else—namely, Money. And as I think

about money, the text which takes to itself an entirely new and tragic meaning is the text which one so often hears begun, but hardly ever finished, in quotation: 1 Timothy vi. 10—"The love of money is the root of all evil: which many following after, have erred from the Faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

The more one ponders over the world, and strives, with what intellect one possesses, to pierce to the heart of its problems with a view to finding a solution, the more poignantly and tragically true do those words become. Indeed, one feels, and feels with a kind of shame, that they might have been strengthened, and still remained true. David said in his haste that all men were liars, and if he had waited a little he might have said it at his leisure. St. Paul says that many, following after the love of money, have erred from the Faith; and one feels that he might have said *all*, and not been far wrong; for if any man says to me that he has no love of money, I immediately begin to wonder whether he is a madman, a millionaire, or a tramp, those being the only types of people I can imagine saying it with anything like sincerity. You see, money gets mixed up with everything. I may say that I do not love money; but I do love my son, love him almost more than anything else on earth, and I desire for him the best that can be got. I desire for his mind the finest development of which it is capable. I desire for his body the best that fresh air, good feeding, and good housing can make of it; and I love to see him—as I have seen him within the last year—with his golden hair streaming in the wind, his blue eyes shining, and his brown legs twinkling, as he runs and shouts upon the shore beside a summer sea. I desire all these things for him, passionately desire them; and before God and my conscience, I

cannot feel the desire is wrong, that it goes beyond what God meant to be daily bread. But I cannot get any of those things for nothing; I have to pay, and often pay through the nose.

So the love of money gets all mixed up with the love of children, the highest with the lowest; the best and worst within us meet, and seem confused.

I may say that I do not love money; but I do love knowledge, I always have done. As long as I can remember, I have wanted to poke my nose into things and get to the bottom of them, and if I am to have knowledge, I must have books; and unfortunately I am not allowed to take my pick of *The Times* Book Club, or Mudies. I have to pay, and often extravagantly. You, poor deluded soul, whoever you are, now reading this, have doubtless had to pay; and perhaps ere now have begun to wonder if you have got your money's worth.

So the love of money meets the Love of Knowledge and of Truth, black blends with white and tends to turn it dirty grey.

I may say that I do not love money; but I do love beauty, my hunger for it is, at times, like pain—and I can satisfy that hunger, and feast on the glory of God's world, finding not seldom in it a joy beyond my powers to express.

God give me speech, in mercy touch my lips,
  I cannot bear Thy Beauty and be still,
Watching the red-gold majesty that tips
  The crest of yonder hill,
And out to sea smites on the sails of ships

That flame like drifting stars across the deep,
  Calling their silver comrades from the sky,
As long, and ever longer shadows creep,
  To sing their lullaby,
And hush the tired eyes of earth to sleep.

Thy radiancy of glory strikes me dumb,
  Yet cries within my soul for power to raise
Such miracles of music, as would sum
  Thy splendour in a phrase,
And store it safe for all the years to come.

O God, Who givest songs too sweet to sing,
  Have mercy on Thy servant's feeble tongue,
In sacrificial silence sorrowing,
  And grant that songs unsung,
Accepted at Thy mercy-seat, may bring

New light into the darkness of sad eyes,
  New tenderness to stay the stream of tears,
New rainbows from the sunshine of surprise
  To guide men down the years,
Until they cross the last long Bridge of Sighs.

I remember sitting down to write that, as the sun went down behind the hills, and turned the sea into a mirror, that reflected all the glory wherein the great High Priest of Nature decks himself when he offers up the evening sacrifice. But as I drank in the beauty, I was conscious of bitterness in it, because even there I could not shut my ears to the cry of the City of Destruction. There were so many thousands and thousands of my fellow creatures who had every bit as much right to this as I had, and could not have it because they could not pay. Not merely because they could not pay the price of an exit from their prison of mean streets; but because the mean streets, had got into their souls and blinded their eyes, so that they could not have seen the beauty even had they been there. And there are thousands, thank God, who are beginning to experience this bitterness because of others' wants.

I know how much English life owes to the Puritan tradition, and I would be the last to under-rate what they have done for us; I should be sad to see the

stern mark that they left upon us blotted out; but I cannot believe that abstract Puritanism is Christian. I cannot believe that God holds out the cup of this life's beauty to us, brimming over with its rich red wine, merely that we may exercise our souls by refusing to put it to our lips. I believe that we were meant to drink, but I believe too that the cup of Beauty was meant to be a loving-cup. There is a sort of blasphemy about drinking it alone, like a solitary communion, that turns its beauty into bitterness. I want to share it with my fellows.

And so the problem of money gets all bound up with the problem of love, and cannot be separated from it. So far as the cry for more money, for better wages, which goes up from the underworld is a cry for more Life, more Beauty—more Truth—it is a cry which ought to find response in every man's heart, no matter what class or party he may belong to. It is not a party or a class cry—it is the cry of humanity for life, and the love of life and the fulness of life cannot be wrong, either in me or in the people of mean streets. Nevertheless, though love of money is mixed up with love of life, and the love of life is right, yet the love of money is all wrong, because it blinds our eyes to the meaning of life. It not only hardens our hearts, it softens our heads, when we think of life in terms of money, and not of money in terms of life. Economics, which is thought out and written in terms of money, is largely a tissue of lies, and it is largely because our economic science is written and thought out in terms of money, that we come inevitably face to face with Proudhon's famous dilemma: "It is surely a bad symptom for a science when, developing itself according to its own principles, it reaches its object just in time to be contradicted by another science; as, for example, when the postulates of political economy are

found to be opposed to those of morality, for I suppose morality is a science as well as political economy. What then is human knowledge, if all its affirmations destroy each other, and on what shall we rely ?" What, indeed ? To suppose that there is a real and permanent contradiction between the truths of Christianity and the truths of political economy, is to declare that one or the other of them has come to false conclusions. This is the *impasse* to which we have actually come, and come, very largely, because we have applied, to both, the methods of material science, which are applicable to neither.

The first thing we have to do is to get behind money and find out what it means. I think the real meaning of money was brought home to me, more fully and clearly, by an incident which occurred in my own experience not long ago than by all the economic text-books I ever read. I was called to the bedside of a girl dying of consumption, and while I was there the doctor came. When he went downstairs, I followed him and asked rather anxiously, "What chance has she ?" He replied : "None whatsoever, as long as she stays where she is," for she was lying—to use mild and unexaggerated language—in one of those abominable pigsties which do duty for houses for a considerable portion of our population. I then asked the inevitable question, "How much ?" and he said "About £30." Well, I went out and got the thirty pounds, and they were in my hand as the wand of Cinderella's fairy godmother. I waved them in the air, and there appeared at the door a taxi, beautifully-sprung ; there was a first-class railway carriage, there was a delightful room with a balcony overlooking the sea, there was a kind-faced nurse, and a doctor with subtle brain and clever hands—and all for £30. Then I knew what money is. It is the power to demand a

human service and to be sure that you will get it. It is always that—unless it is bad money, a meaningless inflation of the currency—it is always human flesh and blood and brains. If you have half-a-crown in your pocket, you have a bit of a man in your pocket. All money is blood money, and much of it is blood money in the vilest sense, for the only thing that entitles a man to use flesh and blood and brain, is the fact of his having given flesh and blood and brain in exchange. If he has not paid a just price in the universal coinage of humanity for what he has, he draws blood money, and his social position is that of a brigand. From that rather appalling fact there appears to be no escape. You may dress your brigand up, and deck him out in all the pageantry of privilege, but he remains a brigand still. The moral law of just exchange is the only basis for a real economic.

But upon what does this power of money to secure human service depend? Is it inherent in the stuff itself? Of course not. Money is not anything in itself. The power of money is always and everywhere the power of credit, using "credit" in its original and proper sense of trust—confidence or faith between human beings. The power of all money is ultimately the power of trust between man and man, and between bodies of men. Unless, indeed, the money is gold. When you are down on to a real gold basis, you are down upon the primitive basis of all trade, which is barter, the exchange of goods for goods, and service for service, direct. All trade was originally barter. A man exchanged a cabbage for a cauliflower, and he did not part with his cabbage until he had jolly well got his cauliflower. But trade on the barter basis takes a long time, and can only be carried out over a very restricted area. As, therefore, the division of abour proceeded, and man concentrated upon one

task, the production of one commodity; and, instead of individually providing himself with all he needed, exchanged his special commodity for others that he wanted, the necessity of one universally-needed commodity, which would be accepted everywhere in exchange for goods, became imperative; and after many experiments men hit upon gold.

But trading in gold is still barter; for gold is a commodity like other commodities, differing only from them in the fact that it is universally needed, or at any rate wanted—that it is portable, durable, and easily divisible. For a long time the main bulk of the world's trade was conducted on a real gold basis; but, as the process of the division of labour evolved into the sub-division of labour, and the need for a more rapid and widely-extensible means of exchange became pressing, men developed a system of paper money based on a gold reserve, involving a promise to pay gold; and thus real credit, or trust, entered in. To take paper for gold was in itself an act of trust, only possible where real credit existed. But it was merely the beginning, men went on to discover that, provided men's credit or faith was not shaken, they would not all demand their gold at the same time, and you could therefore issue more paper than there was gold; and credit, or trust, became more important. This system, beginning with the bank-note device, and developing into cheque and over-draft banking, led to a system of exchange depending more and more upon real credit—confidence or trust—and less and less upon gold or barter. *And the further this development proceeded, the more vital became the mental and spiritual factor in economics.*

When the War broke out, the tendency received an artificial impetus. There was a great deal of temporary real credit established among the Allied

Nations; and industry, under the pressure of an almost unlimited demand for the supplies of War, quickened its pace, demanding a much more rapid exchange of goods and services. The Governments met this in the only way it could be met, by an extension of the credit system, borrowing and issuing paper currency. The whole fabric that was subsequently built up was a mortgage on the future which had no *real* basis except the trust and confidence of man in man, nation in nation, and class in class. The barter or gold basis of trade became less than nominal, it became in reality non-existent.

This might have been done without disaster, if the real credit had lasted; but, alas and alack, that could not be. You cannot consistently foster and encourage the anti-social passions of mankind—fear, hatred, suspicion, reckless falsehood, and an utter disregard for the value of human life—for five years, and expect at the end to find trust, confidence, mutual understanding and forbearance, which are the spiritual realities underlying credit, unimpaired. We were very soon brought to our senses, and faced with the fact that our money was beginning to mean nothing at all, the whole moral and spiritual basis upon which it rested having been completely undermined.

In this dilemma you can do one of two things; one is mad, the other is the best you can do, but it is still bad. You can either go on making more money on nothing, which is mad because it means going on on a credit basis which is not there; or, recognising the fact that real credit is not there, *you can reverse the natural economic process and, turning your back on credit, descend towards barter.* Immediately you do that, the whole system of exchange of goods and services slows down, the wheel of industry turns

less rapidly, and as it slackens its pace, it casts off, into the pit of idleness and unemployment, thousands and thousands of men and machines. Germany took the mad course, and we took the bad one, which was still the best. Both countries are paying for it, each in their own particular way.

But what we have to learn from the whole miserable business, is the true nature of the world in which we live, and a clear vision of the spiritual basis of the whole economic process by which we get our daily bread. We must learn to see that—underlying the material unity of industry which binds us all into an interdependence, man with man, class with class, nation with nation, from which we cannot by any conceivable means escape—there must be built up a corresponding spiritual unity ; or else we must face the inevitable alternative of widespread famine and want. Not only in time of war—which has merely served to reveal to the ordinary observer the real nature of a complex industrial system—but in time of peace, we depend for our daily bread entirely upon the maintenance of *real credit*, and it is perfectly certain that, without that real credit, any system whatsoever—socialist or individualist, democratic or autocratic—would, under modern conditions, fail to work even passably well.

We thus reach the position that real credit is to us literally life, and the lack of it death, in every sense of both those tragic words. Now credit is of two sorts ; there is either the credit of fear, or the credit of faith. Ultimately the whole life of the world, under modern conditions, depends upon the credit existing between the weak and the strong, between weak men and strong men, weak classes and strong classes, weak nations and strong nations. There must always be in the world the weak and the strong ; for

inequality of ability and power is characteristic and always will be characteristic of humanity. There is no more disastrous error in social teaching than the confusion of the Christian Truth of the equal value of every soul before God with the false idea of equality of ability and power. In ability and power men and races are by nature unequal, nor can education do away with or lessen that inequality, it even tends to extend and increase it. As power has passed from the men of brawn to the men of brain the inequalities have become greater not less. We must hold both these truths—the Truth of equal spiritual value, and permanently unequal natural power—together, without confusion, they are the two roots of the Christian doctrine of service. Every man—weak or strong—receives his powers as a trust from God wherewith to serve the Family of man. The world's work must always, and under any system of industry, be done by a combination of the strong and the weak, the ordinary and the exceptional man, and the credit between the weak and the strong can either be the credit of fear or the credit of faith. Either the weak will work for the strong because they fear them; or they will work with the strong because they trust them.

There can be very little doubt that the credit which supported the growth and expanse of industry in the nineteenth century was very largely the credit of fear. As J. M. Keynes puts it: "The labouring classes accepted through ignorance or powerlessness, or were compelled, persuaded, or cajoled by custom, convention, authority, and the well-established order of society, into accepting a situation in which they could call their own very little of the cake that they and Nature and the capitalists were co-operating to produce." That is the weak working for the strong

on the credit of fear. But this basis of credit has been rapidly breaking down for the last forty years, because the weak men of the world have made a discovery. They have discovered that by combination they can become the equal, or nearly the equal, of the strong, and that while strong men can declare their independence of individual weak men, they can be obliged to recognise that they are dependent upon a combination of them. With this discovery, the credit of fear breaks down. If I am going up a mountain with my enemy, and we are entirely separate, and he, having a revolver, can bowl me over a precipice any moment, I shall go very steadily: but if I am tied to him by a rope, and I know that if he bowls me over, he goes himself, I shall not care half as much. The weak men have perceived that there is a rope of economic inter-dependence which binds them to the strong, and therefore their fear grows less.

Everywhere it becomes clearer and clearer that *we cannot get the world's work done by force, and that if we try to do so we shall starve.* Slavery disappeared from the world not only because it was bad morals but because it was bad business. If a man will only work for you because you kick him, you must always be there to kick him that he may work, and under modern conditions of skilled and elaborately subdivided labour, you cannot always be there, and slavery becomes impossible. The credit of fear is going, if not gone. It is economic lunacy attempting to revive it, and moral lunacy as well. We are therefore nailed down, by the logic of facts, to the utter necessity of the revival of the credit of goodwill, with the alternative of spiritual and physical ruin. The credit of goodwill between the classes and the nations has been seriously undermined. Distrust, natural distrust, of the strong, is common in the ranks of the weak. They

have awakened, or are awakening, out of their apathy and ignorance, and are seeing clearly, and with frightened eyes, the situation in which they stand. They are reading the history of the past, and it does not help to make their suspicion less; and at the same time their anti-social passions are being fanned to flame by a small, but powerful, band of men and women, whose gospel is the gospel of despair—consisting in the belief that you must smash up this intricate and complex system which rests on the credit of goodwill—because goodwill is unattainable—and chance what comes out of the chaos.

The efforts of the apostles of despair are aided and abetted by a small, but also powerful, section of the strong, who still believe in the credit of fear, and are terribly afraid of its breakdown; believing, as the desperate ones believe, that the credit of goodwill is little more than an idle dream, and who therefore are closing their ranks, and steadily resisting any and every effort which is made to put things on to a sound spiritual basis. Their war-cry of anti-bolshevism is one of the main causes of Bolshevism, because it breeds inevitable hatred, bitterness, and suspicion among the weak. As is the habit of all would-be tyrants, these people produce what they seek to destroy.

There is really but one way, there never has been any other; only God can give us our daily bread. We are, as we always have been in reality, utterly dependent upon Him. There is no other power which can fill the industrial organism with health and life, except the power of His Spirit. Economics and religion are not opposed, they are not even divided; they are not two things, they are two sides of one thing, the inside and the outside; you can no more separate them than you can separate body and soul. The only

way in which real credit of goodwill can be restored and maintained between individuals, nations, and classes, is to raise the whole industrial and financial system on to a higher moral and spiritual basis. Trade must be a vocation, and economics a sacred study in the best sense of the word. The problem of bread will continue to divide us, and to ruin us body and soul, until bread becomes to us more than bread, and we see it for what it is, as the Body of the Lord. So long as we continue to eat and drink, not discerning the Lord's Body, we shall eat and drink to our selves' damnation.

It is this truth which underlies the whole sacramental system of the Church, as it underlies our Lord's whole revelation of Himself as the Bread of Life. It was just after His compassion had led Him into feeding the multitude, and they had responded, as they almost inevitably would respond, by an attempt to make Him King, that He delivered the great sermon on the Bread of Life which turned many away from following Him. Whichever way we take it, whether it be that the actual miracle occurred, or that it is really an acted parable, the lesson is the same, namely, the spiritual basis of supply. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Bring your resources and lay them at the Feet of Christ, and they will be ample to meet your every need.

Material poverty is an evil, not because it necessitates simplicity of life; it does not, in itself, necessitate that, it does not produce automatic poverty of spirit, it more frequently produces covetousness and envy; it is an evil, because it is the sacrament of sin, "the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual disgrace," which is the best description of the great multitude of mean streets that I have ever

heard. Many of those who are most emphatic upon the Sacramental Presence of Our Lord in the Bread which is His Body and the Wine which is His Blood, never seem to have thought out or pondered over the connection between that Presence, and the presence of God in His whole creation. That neglect is a disaster to religion. We must be quite clear, that we go to find Him there, so that we may the better find Him everywhere; that the Sacrament leads us, not to a localisation, but to a deeper sense of the Omnipresence, of God. The connection between the Sacrament and what is loosely called the "Sacramental Principle" of the universe, needs to be perceived and firmly held. He makes Himself known to us in the Breaking of Bread, that He may more truly and consciously be the honoured guest at every meal, and the most living partner in every enterprise whereby we earn our daily bread. That is why the Collection at the Sacrament becomes the Offertory, and the "alms" are one with the "oblations"—our money being united with the Bread and the Wine, that through His Presence in the Bread and Wine He may consecrate our money to be a spiritual bond of Peace throughout the world. To neglect or put in the background this essential connection, is to make sacramental worship quite definitely idolatrous. If Holy Communion does not lead to honest commerce, it fails of its fruit, and "by their fruits ye shall know them." Commerce is communion, and it must either be Holy Communion, or a cursed counterfeit, which leads not to life but to death. Once and for all let us remember, that the sweep of the Sacrament is as wide as the world. If our faith in the real presence of our Lord in the consecrated Bread upon the altar, does not really lead us to perceive His real presence in all bread —if it amounts to anything like the localisation of the

Presence of God—our sacramental worship has in itself the nature of sin, for sin, at its root, is the denial of the Omnipresence of God. If our love of God's House does not consecrate for us all houses and all homes, if it tends to separate the sanctuary and the street, then our religious observances are literally blasphemous.

In an extraordinarily beautiful passage of his "Confessio Fidei," the Dean of St. Paul's confesses: "At times the moving waters at their priest-like task seem to have the power which Euripides ascribes to them, of washing away all human ills. At times the mountains speak plainly of the Ancient of Days who was before they began to be; but too often Nature only echoes back my own moods, and seems dark or bright because I am sad or merry. The sweet sanctities of home life, and especially the innocence and affection of young children, more often bring me near to the felt Presence of God."

But, in the Name of God, how are those sweet sanctities to be obtained and preserved, and how is childhood's robe of innocence to be kept white, while our people are housed as they are? Crowded on the top of one another, living under conditions where decent privacy is impossible, playing in streets where evil besets them at every turn; compelled to see things which the Dean would not allow his children to look upon, and is able to protect them from, as I am able to protect mine from them, merely by the fact that I can pay. Unless the felt presence of God in your own children makes you long that others too may have that means of grace, it is not God you feel, but a mere creature of your own diseased and super-intellectualised imagination.

If the Church is to be a Church indeed, and not a mere farce—and a peculiarly pernicious farce, a game

of sentimental make-believe—she must be filled to overflowing with the fire of the ancient prophets for social righteousness, with the wrath and love of the Christ. Her very existence is bound up with, and dependent upon, an effort, an effort which does not count the cost in any terms of pain, to Christianise the social order under which we live. If I had the tongue of men and of angels, I would use it to plead with the Christian Church, and more especially with those sections of it which profess and call themselves Catholic, to face the real meaning and hope of their calling, and get to grips, as Our Lord from the very beginning got to grips, with the problem of Bread. Unless they do that, no unbroken Apostolic Succession can make their sacraments valid, and no wealth of gorgeous ritual can save their souls alive; for sacrament and ritual alike are mockery, unless they mean the consecration of all things in heaven and earth to the service of the Everlasting God.

VIII *Forgive us our Trespasses*

THOMAS HARDY'S great historical drama, "The Dynasts," will, I believe, win for itself a prominent and permanent place among the literary and dramatic achievements of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. It is, of course, not the kind of work which has a wide popular appeal, not the kind of book I would advise you to sit down and read after a heavy meal; you would almost certainly go to sleep; but it is monumental literature and monumental thought. Any attempt to put into dramatic form the history of those amazing years of the Napoleonic era, when the whole history of Europe centred about a single personality, as perhaps it never had done before or has done since, would always be a great endeavour, but by no means a hopeless one. For surely history never supplied to any dramatist a hero quite so wonderful or romantic as that strange little man, to whom God gave so much brain and so little sense, who strutted across the stage of European history like a turkey-cock, from the proud and high-hearted beginning as a Patriot in Corsica to the rather mean and squalid ending, on the Island of St. Helena.

But the greatness of Thomas Hardy's play does not lie in the dramatic action, half so much as in the comments upon the action, which are supplied, after the manner of the Greek drama, by choruses of spirits. The absorbing interest is focussed round the question which the Pities keep hurling at the Fates, as they look

down upon the stage of Europe bathed in blood, and ask with wondering awe, what is the meaning of it all ? What plan or purpose is being worked out, through this prolonged and strangely tortuous agony ? And in the stern reply of the Fates, which is, in effect—" No " " plan and no purpose ; it is like the rest of human " " history, a tale told by a fool, full of sound and " " fury, signifying absolutely nothing. Round and " " round, in endless cycles of sorrow following sorrow," " and sin that grows from sin, human history runs " " its course to nothingness at last. And all things " " in the end will be as though nothing had ever " " been."

I remember lying and reading this great work, in a tent one summer night at Reninghelst, when my battalion was obliged to go up the line without me. It did not affect them, or impair their fighting efficiency but it deeply affected me ; and I remember, as they passed out of the gate of " Mickmack " Camp, they all began to sing together, " There's a long, long trail a-winding, Into the land of my dreams," and I lay and listened until the sound died away into the silence, and then took up my book again to read. But, fascinated as I was by the beauty of Hardy's glorious blank verse, I could not stand it very long. I took it and hurled it at the head of the boy who was looking after me, and said : " Joe, my son, take this and burn it, or light fags with it—anything you like—it's enough to give a healthy man, never mind an unfortunate fellow that's full of Boche gas, the hump and the blue devils for fourteen years." And then I held an indignation meeting in my own soul, in which I made a great speech, the rest of me listening, and said : " It's not got to go round and round in cycles ; it's got to go on. They may have made a hash of the Congress of Vienna, but we are going to do better than

that. That was the peace of potentates; this shall be the peace of peoples and the healing of the world. (Hear, hear.) Men must have learned their lesson now, and they won't go mad again. When all this blood and misery is over, we are going to make Christ really King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and the only Ruler of Princes." And I believed that. I think I believed it more passionately and whole-heartedly, and loved the vision more passionately and whole-heartedly, than I have ever believed in or loved anything or anybody else in the world; and, God help me, I believe it still. But faith is not easy—there are so many facts that point the other way.

Thomas Hardy, or some other great poet (he would have to be a great one) might write another drama, and call it "The Democrats," and the dramatic action would be as bloody, as beastly, as apparently futile and abortive, as Napoleon's business ever was; and if it were not for Christ, I would adopt Hardy's faith —or unfaith—whichever you like to call it—and would set about building my soul's habitation on Bertrand Russell's lasting foundations of unyielding despair. If it were not for Christ. But He makes all the difference. I agree that a great deal of Herbert Spencer's crude optimism, based upon the idea that progress was a kind of mechanical necessity, reads to-day like the babblings of a cocksure school-boy, counting his chickens before they are hatched. I agree, because I have got to agree, that there are limits to the defiance which Faith can hurl at facts. I agree that there is no inevitable law of progress. I agree that progress, like everything else in human life, is conditional, and depends upon a choice—the choice 'twixt heaven and hell; and, apart from Christ, I see no hope that that choice will be made and made aright. But because I believe in Him—believe in

Him as the very word of God and the revelation of the ultimate reality—I believe that the choice *will* be made and be made aright; and that, not merely will individuals be saved out of the human race, but rather that, though individuals may be lost and cease to exist, in a very real sense the race will come to the measure of the fulness of the Stature of Christ.

But all the evidence, the piled-up heap of evidence, contradicts the idea that the world is merely imperfect; there is crushing proof that it is also diseased. It is not only an infant, it is an unhealthy infant, and therefore needs not merely education and development, but positive healing and redemption—it needs the forgiveness of sins. And if it be true, as George Bernard Shaw says, that there is no forgiveness of sins, then I go with Thomas Hardy all the way, and am left without hope in the world.

All our hopes, individual and corporate (and if you have grasped my meaning so far, you will have perceived that there cannot be any real individual hope unless there is a corporate one; we cannot be saved alone), all our hopes depend upon whether the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be true or false; upon the existence of a power which can, not merely enlighten our ignorance, and complete our imperfections, but bear our sicknesses, and heal our diseases.

It does not matter what philosophy of evolution you adopt, you have got to account for two features of it which apparently conflict. The first is its broadly progressive character, which, if you take it in the length and width of its sweep, makes almost inevitable the belief that there is some purpose running through it. It is quite certain that there has been a progress, a progress which finds its crown and culmination in man;

and the fact that there has been progress, is a ground for hope that it may be continued.

> So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still
> Will lead me on,
> O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
> The night is gone.

The man who despairs of the future, will do well to look back and see the road by which the human race has come; let him look to the rock whence it was hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence it was digged. The last verse of Newman's great hymn always brings up before me the vision—not merely of the changes and chances of my own life, through which I discern with difficulty a purpose and plan—but the strange and wonderful journey by which the human race has come to be what it is; a journey which, science tells me, is briefly and rapidly recapitulated in the pre-natal life of every child that is born into the world. There does seem to be conclusive evidence, in the light of this great movement which knowledge has disclosed, that God has a purpose, not merely for the individual man, but for the race as a whole. Indeed, the evidence would seem to point to the fact that, while for individuals the fulfilment of the purpose appears to be conditional upon their response to God's call, there is something inevitable about the working out of the great purpose for the race as a whole—the purpose cannot fail.

The second, and apparently conflicting feature, which must be taken into account, is, that throughout the whole course of the evolution of life there is abundant evidence of retrogression, false adaptation, arrested development, and whole lines of evolution which apparently end in a *cul de sac* and lead nowhere.

These two facts, taken together, present the problem of evil in its initial and most elementary

form ; and the problem is just as incapable of intellectual solution in this as in any other form. We cannot bring these retrogressions and apparent failures into any rational scheme, or explain them as parts of an ordered whole. We can only discern the line along which evil comes, if we recognise the fact that wherever there is life there is indeterminism, and that a purely mechanical conception of evolution is impossible.

In the very humblest of living organisms, there is the beginning of liberty, and, apparently, from the very first that liberty can be misused. In the humblest organism this misuse of its very limited liberty, leads to a failure to correspond with its real environment ; and will issue in degeneracy, disease and finally death. There is evidence of this throughout the whole strange process of the evolution of life. This embryo liberty reaches its crown and culmination in man ; and in man its misuse leads to more dreadful results, and gives birth not only to degeneracy, arrested development, and disease, but to deliberate and wilful rebellion, and a refusal to respond to an environment perceived to be real. This rebellion and refusal constitute sin. And so the problem of evil is presented in its fullest and most tragic form.

All the evidence points to the fact that sin and disease are so deeply rooted and so widespread in the human race, and work such wholesale havoc with its life, that, unless there is a power of healing and redemption at work, our hopes of attaining to anything like perfection are but very small. Sin and disease are evil, definite evil, not imperfect good ; they do not call for improvement, they call for destruction ; they must not be developed, they must cease to exist. Now it was precisely to accomplish this, that Jesus Christ declared Himself to have been sent by God. The Son

of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil; and "the works of the devil" means evil in all its forms.

The forgiveness of sins, in its fullest sense, signifies nothing less than the destruction of evil; and to believe in the forgiveness of sins implies the belief that evil can be destroyed, and that men can be set completely free from their bondage to it. Such a freedom is the glorious liberty of the Sons of God, into which, in the experience of Christians, Christ has the power to raise them. "This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

But how? Well, although we face up to the fact of evil and the problem it presents, we must not allow it to obscure our vision of the fact of good. There is no trace anywhere, that evil has been able to change, or permanently to baffle, the purpose of God. In spite of retrogression, arrested development, and apparent failure, the main purpose of God has gone on; and it was in fulfilment of that purpose, which has never changed, that Christ came. Although the effect of His coming is to bring into the real environment of man a new redemptive and re-creative power, which can, and does, destroy evil, yet His coming was not caused by the existence of evil, but by the existence of imperfection. He came to crown and complete the purpose of God, which evil had been able to hinder, but not to frustrate.

It is idle, of course, to speculate as to what the coming of Christ would have meant, if man had not misused his liberty and there had been no positive sin; but we may be sure that He would have come. The life and immortality which He brought to light, was the fulfilment of the purpose of God which He willed before the world was. It is the revelation of

the meaning of the whole strange and wonderful process, and was implicit in protoplasm to become explicit in Christ. He was and is the Being, the I AM of eternity, into which man, a prisoner in Time, is slowly evolving and becoming. He brought to men a new vision of God, that is, a new sense of the real meaning of their environment, and therefore a new chance and power to correspond with it, and attain to fulness of life. Those who believe on Him are not merely saved from perishing, but they gain eternal life; that is, they are advanced in the scale of life to a stage to which, even had they maintained their innocency, they could not have attained, apart from Him. The revelation of God in Jesus Christ is exactly what the revelation of Him in His creation would lead us to expect; although, apart from His coming, we could never have attained to it unaided.

The evolutionary process of creation, with its suggestion of urge, or drive, in a definite and culminating direction, gives the impression of a Supreme Mind going forth in a creative and directive energetic activity, as the result of which physical organisations are built up of ever-increasing complexity suitable for the reception of its ever-increasing influx. As Bergson puts it, "I see, in the whole evolution of life on our planet, a crossing of matter by creative consciousness, an effort to set free, by force of ingenuity and invention, something which in the animal still remains imprisoned, and is only finally released when we reach man;" and, we would add, is not finally released in man until man is perfected and redeemed in Christ.

The coming of Christ is the final stage in the urge or drive, which is evident everywhere in the process of creation; it was the final coming of God. And the essence of the Christian revelation is that revelation of God as a coming God, a seeking God, a Good

Shepherd Who seeks His sheep; a poor woman who seeks her lost coin, and leaves no least stone unturned to find it; a Father seeking for His sons; a Love that never ceases, and by its nature never could cease, to seek for perfect expression in man. Wherever and whenever there is the remotest chance of this living energy of Love breaking out into new and more perfect forms of beauty, it will do so. Nothing keeps it back, not even sin. That, surely, is the whole essence of the Christian Truth—Not even sin. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Before we repented, God loved us. Sin did estrange man from God; but it never has, and it never could, estrange God from man. God never waits for us to come to Him, God is for ever coming to us—He is the coming God.

Because in tender majesty
Thou cam'st to earth, nor stayed till we,
Poor sinners, stumbled up to Thee,
I thank my God.

Because the Saviour of us all
Lay with the cattle in their stall,
Because the Great came to the small,
I thank my God.

Because upon a Mother's breast
The Lord of Life was laid to rest,
And was of babes the loveliest,
I thank my God.

Because the Eternal Infinite
Was once that little naked Mite,
Because—O Love of Christmas night,
I thank my God!

He came in Time, to reveal His perpetual coming; and the forgiveness of sins is the inevitable result of His coming with His gift of eternal life to the human soul. We get much nearer to the significance of the

forgiveness of sins, when we think of it in terms of life, than when we think of it in terms of law. Forgiveness is always regeneration, new birth; sin is always a process of decay, rather than an act of disobedience.

All the great words—Forgiveness, Redemption, Conversion, Regeneration—need to be thought of in terms of the New Life. The farther we get away from the legal, law-court metaphors, like remission of penalty, or punishment, or the turning-away of wrath, and think of forgiveness as a birth, a growth, and a coming-of-age, the nearer we get to the heart of the New Testament, and the heart of our Lord. Christ came to bring Eternal Life, and in that life lies at once both our redemption and completion.

God is seeking you now. If for one single moment He could cease to seek you, the stars would fall, and the very mountains crumble into dust. He is seeking you, as He is seeking the dirtiest, meanest apology for a man that crawls upon the earth; and wherever He gets the shadow of a chance, He will succeed.

But, throughout the whole course of evolution, it is evident that life in all its forms, from the lowest to the highest, comes, and can only come, to the individual through a community. That appears to be an everlasting law, a final necessity; the parts only grow through their unity with the whole. And it is so with the Eternal Life, and with the redemption and completion that come with it; there is no redemption or completion for the individual apart from the community, there is no Love of God apart from the love of Man—the two great commandments are an eternal unity. From the very beginning, there grew out of Christ a new social order, a new community; and only in and through that community and its life could redemption come. Every command and every

saying of His, from the Sermon on the Mount to His last recorded words on earth, pre-supposes that the Eternal Life is a social life, and is ministered through and in a new social order.

Herein lies the distinct difference between the gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and all those religions which offer man heaven through ascetic and solitary contemplation of the Being of God. It is of the very being of Christianity that it is a social life. Perfection and redemption alike come through the body. If you take out of the New Testament the idea of the Kingdom of God, and the Beloved Community, which is the seed from which it grows in time, there is nothing intelligible left. It is in the beloved community that the gift of Eternal Life, and therefore the power of man's redemption and completion, is to be found: "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained," was said to the body of the apostles; and said, I believe, not because they were apostles in any sense that ranks them above all other Christians, but because they formed the first Christian Body.

The Sermon on the Mount lays down the law of the Kingdom; throughout, from beginning to end, it pre-supposes a new order of community life: "For I say unto you, take no thought what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek), for your Heavenly Father knoweth you have need of all these things." It is the law for the true Israel of God. The Kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their oppressors are styled benefactors, but it must not be so with you. No, let the great men among you be the humblest ministers, and your leaders the servants of all. It is a new order of life; and through that order comes the forgiveness of sins.

And so when the Church goes out on her crusade against sin and sickness, she goes out with the call to men to be baptised for the remission of sins. She calls them to be grafted on to the beloved community, and, partaking of the new life which pulses through it, to be healed of their sickness and their sin. Infant Baptism as it is practised in the Church to-day is a caricature of what it was meant to be, and lacks reality, because the sense of the Church as the Beloved Community, in which the new Life is to be found, has become so weak. It was meant to be a Sacrament and has become a ceremony because the Community Life of Christian Churches is so poverty-stricken. Often the Sacrament is administered without any congregation to welcome the child, in a half lighted Church on a week-day evening, with no one present but the relatives. It is regarded as a private concern of the parents, not a public concern of the Church. Hence it has become a charm, a magic survival, and people bring their children to the priest to be christened as they bring them to the doctor to be vaccinated. Soon they will begin to wonder whether it is of any use at all, whether it is anything but a convention. The duty of Godfathers is to give the child a silver mug, and not to care for its soul, because the reality has gone out of it, and the reality is membership of a living, loving body of Christians, through which the Spirit gives new life, and in that new life remission of sins.

Our modern idea that sin is a private business, and that salvation is a matter between the individual and God only, does not appear in the New Testament at all, and is entirely foreign to the whole spirit of Christianity. Indeed, the whole notion of an individual who exists and grows by communion with God apart from communion with man, is, from a Christian

point of view, nonsense. And herein, I believe, lies the weakness of our redemptive work; for it is weak. We are not destroying evil as we should do, we are not healing sickness and saving men from sin as our Saviour meant us to. Everyone who is engaged in Christian work knows that that is true. We hold Mission after Mission, and the report upon them is almost always the same—they confirmed and strengthened the faithful, but there was felt to be a weakness in the amount of positive saving and healing work accomplished by them. Here and there are Churches of which this is not true, but they are rather the exception than the rule. Why is this? Wherein does the weakness lie?

I believe that in all our Churches, and in every branch of Christendom, it is due to one root cause, the lack of real community life in the Body, and this pernicious idea that sin is a private matter between the individual soul and God, and has nothing to do with anybody else. No one must come between me and my God, a common saying of pious people, is a definitely anti-Christian saying, which regards brother man as a barrier to, and not a means of grace; and that is in itself sin.

I do not think that even the Churches which profess and call themselves Catholic, really escape this weakness. Catholicism has taken unto itself strange meanings in these latter days, and the practice of what is called "private confession" is no guarantee of real community life, it is very often purely private, a reconciliation of the individual soul to its God, rather than a restoration to a living body which lives with the Life of God.

The ancient practice of public confession sprang from, and was filled with, the reality of community life. When some man was drawn from the streets of

Rome, or the docks of Corinth, into the little Christian Brotherhood, and was baptised for the remission of sins, becoming thereby a partaker of its vivid and conscious social life, so that he learned to say, "I know that I have passed from death unto life because I love the Brethren," he experienced the forgiveness of sins. And if he fell away, and was sucked back into the evil streets again, when his soul grew sick and he began to long for the clean air of the Christian Brotherhood, he would creep back some Saturday night when the Brethren were met in preparation for the Eucharist, and, standing up before them all, would confess his fault and ask to come back into the family. And then the elder Brother, the "presbyteros" or priest, *speaking for the family of God*, would absolve him from his sin, and take him back again to share in the common life. But it was the community that absolved, it was in the family that the power of healing and regeneration lay. Although this truth underlies so-called "private confession," it is a truth that is obscure—obscure for two reasons, as it seems to me—first of all, because we think of a Priest far too much as one who represents God, rather than as one who represents the Brotherhood in which God dwells, and through which His Life is imparted to men; and, secondly, because the community, the Church which he represents, is, as a matter of fact, poverty-stricken in its Christian social life.

There is not, there never can be, anything approaching to the magical or mechanical about the Sacraments; they cannot and do not work as charms, nor does it seem to be possible to guarantee their actual efficacy because they are administered by Churches which are theologically orthodox and ecclesiastically correct. It is not possible to guarantee that a man can administer effectual absolution, because he is a successor of the

apostles in direct historic line ; the apostolic succession is powerless to make a dead Church live. The Prophet must still lift up his cry of warning to the Priest, "Begin not to say within yourselves, we have Peter and Paul for our Fathers, for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Peter."

What ? you say, does the presence of God and His power depend upon the character of the Priest ? Then we are in a poor case indeed ! God forbid. The presence and the Love of God depend upon nothing and no one ; but His power to heal does depend, and has always depended upon the faith of His Church and the vitality within it. It is as true to-day as it was in the days of His flesh, that in thousands of places to which He comes, and in which He longs to heal and to save, He cannot do many mighty works there because of their unbelief. It does not need any community, it does not need any sacrament, it did not even need the death of Christ, to secure God's Love for you, to secure that He will come seeking you ; He does that everywhere at all times, for everybody ; but it does need a community, and it does need sacraments, as the centre of community life, in order that that Love may be enabled to break through the barriers that sin erects, that He may pour into your soul His own Eternal Life, and heal your sin. This is the awful responsibility that is laid upon us all, that in this matter, as in all others, we are our brothers' keepers ; and from that responsibility we cannot escape by any sin-proof system or material organisation. We cannot keep the Church alive, and preserve her powers of healing, by mere doctrinal discipline, however strict, or ecclesiastical order, however perfect and correct.

The rebellion against organised religion—so far as it is justifiable and not the result of mere ignorance and shallow thinking—is a rebellion against a body

which is felt to have no soul. In so far as this rebellion is a claim that each man's religion is his own private affair, and has nothing to do with his brother, and needs no community through which to express itself and in which to grow, it is the negation of religion and the denial of Christ. But in so far as it seeks for a living body, demanding the fruits of the Spirit as proof of its life, and refusing to be content with doctrinal, ecclesiastical, or historical guarantees, it is the rebellion of the Christ Himself against the tomb in which His enemies—many of whom are Christians—would confine Him.

I shall be told, perhaps, that I am denying the validity of my own Orders, professing disbelief in my own Church, and depriving men of the certain settled conviction that the Church is the Ark of Salvation. I am doing none of these things. I believe that Christ is in the Anglican Church, that the community is alive with His life, that there is, in her, regeneration for the remission of sins; but I believe—because I am compelled by bitter compulsion to believe—that there are parts of her where that life beats very feebly, where the Christ is crucified afresh, and where He cannot do any mighty works because of unbelief. And I believe—because I am compelled to believe—that it is literally impossible to confine the healing and redeeming power of God within any branch whatsoever of the Christian Church, or by any boundaries of ecclesiastical organisation.

I know of Nonconformist Ministers who can, and do, absolve people from their sins by the power of the community they represent. I see no escape from it, and to deny it would be a sin against the Holy Ghost. I know altars within the Anglican Communion, from which a constant stream of healing and redemption flows; I know of others, where literally nothing is

being done at all. You say, I cannot know that, the altars may be empty, but the angels may be there. I have no doubt whatsoever that they are; but Jesus did not come to save angels, but sinners. And the same thing applies to every other body in Christendom calling itself a Church. *Its power to help and to heal varies, according to the vitality of Christian Brotherhood that is to be found in it.* If you tell me this makes the whole thing uncertain, that there is no positive guarantee, no infallible hall-mark whereby you can know the ship of salvation as made by God, I reply that it is and always has been uncertain; that there is not, and there never has been, any absolute guarantee; that there is not, and cannot be, any infallible hall-mark except the Love of the Brethren. And where that is not present, there is no Church in any real sense, and there is no saving power, and never has been.

The attempt to organise or construct a vast and complex institution, by mere adherence to which a man can be certain of salvation, is the most utterly futile of all the attempts to build Utopia; and, like a very large number of other Utopias, would mean for man, not salvation, but hell, if it could become reality.

This attempt to find or found the infallible institution, has meant the death of real religion. It has led to a mechanical idea of the Sacrament of Absolution, which has largely destroyed its efficacy. The Church—secure in its ecclesiastical orthodoxy, or anxiously and ingeniously defending it—has neglected, or been distracted from, its proper business of destroying evil, and effectively absolving or freeing people from the power of sin. And sinners in their desperation have turned to gross superstition, or to the New Psychologists, for help and healing which they do not get in their Church. Thousands of men and

women, many of them young men and women, are seeking from Freud and Jung what they ought to find in Christ. Partly this may be their fault—there is more than a smack of the Athenian about modern youth, both of the male and female variety; they dearly love something new. Moreover, the New Psychology is "scientific," and the authority of "science" is a power to conjure with in these days. Formerly people took the priest on trust, and followed blindly where he led; nowadays the scientist has taken his place, and it is assumed that what is claimed to be scientific must be true. The authority of the doctor is more absolute than that of the priest, and the New Psychologist comes in under his wing, so to speak. It is no good complaining about this change. The scientist has largely won his authority because he has produced results, and we have largely lost ours because we have not. But neither of us is really doing the job.

The conclusions of the New Psychology are very tentative and its methods of healing largely experimental; and the results of the craze for psycho-analysis are in many cases disastrous. The cure seems worse than the disease. It is clear that the practice of what is called psycho-therapeutics by enthusiastic amateurs is full of really appalling dangers, and that even in the hands of experts it requires caution and careful handling. Nevertheless it is there, and has come to stay. If some of the conclusions are tentative, there appears to be a solid residuum of ascertained truth; and if much of the method is experimental, it does in many cases produce wonderful results. And these results, so far as they go, are exactly the results which religion ought to produce. Men and women are set free from the bondage of bad habits, from fears and depressions,

which have driven them into much that we call, and rightly call, sin. Bitterness, jealousy, envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, as well as positive vice, may all spring from, and be due to, some suppression or complex, and may disappear when the complex is dissolved. If absolution means anything, it includes in its meaning freedom from the power of these sins. Doubtless absolution, first of all, means restoration of the soul to communion with God; but if that restoration is effective, it ought to carry with it liberation from the power of evil. If men and women find that they can obtain that liberation from the psycho-analyst, which they fail to obtain in the Church, then they will turn more and more to him for help in their trouble.

Well, you say, so long as they obtain it, what does it matter where? The psycho-analyst is God's minister as the doctor is, and, in his sphere, is doing priestly work. It is only another proof that you cannot confine God's Mercy within the channels which you choose to suppose are the orthodox ones. The power which the analyst wields, is every bit as much God's power as the power of the priest. Far be it from me to call good evil, or to deny that, so far as the analyst heals men of sin and sickness, he is doing God's work, and doing it by God's power; but there are other considerations. Redemption, as we have seen, means not only that men "do not perish," but that they have "everlasting life"; not only that they are saved from degeneracy, but are given a higher order of life; they are not merely rescued, but completed. Now, supposing we admit that the analyst does heal men and women of mental sickness, which is the cause of much that we call sin, and that his work is so far good—has he the power of completing that work, and lifting the life on to a higher

level altogether? Healing on the lower level may often be a dangerous thing for the man or woman, looked at as an immortal soul. Without for one moment casting any aspersion on the good work of the medical profession, it is doubtful whether they do not cause as well as cure disease—whether the constant suggestion of sickness with which we are to-day surrounded, and our readiness to have recourse to medicine for its cure, does not induce us, at times, to postpone or refuse that radical alteration in our whole way of living and thinking, which would lead us to real health. The divorce between the functions of the doctor and priest is in many ways dangerous to both. These considerations apply as forcibly to the analyst and the nerve-specialist, as they do to the medical practitioner. If one studies and understands the power of repeated suggestion upon the human mind, the wholesale publication and large circulation of comparatively cheap books on psycho-analysis is an alarming business. The continual discussion of the subject among young people has led, in my experience, to very unpleasant results, and has proved to be the very reverse of elevating.

From a Christian point of view, what the analyst is really doing is to dissect the carnal mind, and by observing its behaviour over a wide field, and tabulating his results, to discover, or attempt to discover, the laws by which it works, and so cure its diseases. The process, it is admitted by all, leads one into strange places. Go down with Freud into the very depths—and it is difficult to prevent a feeling of nausea as you proceed. Of course, the obvious reply to that is, that the healer must be prepared to deal with sickening things; the surgeon must open the abscess and let out the filth it contains. An operation, to a layman, is a sickening

business. If there is all this hidden ugliness in the depth of the human mind, it is better to face the facts, and get down to it. Because a thing is unpleasant, it is not therefore untrue. We must not be turned away from the pursuit of important truths, because they lead us into evil-smelling places.

It is the continual emphasis on the sex-impulse that makes much of Freud's work so unpleasant to read; but as he himself observes, "Society can conceive of no more powerful menace to its culture than would arise from the liberation of the sexual impulses, and a return of them to their original goal. Therefore, Society dislikes this sensitive place in its development being touched upon; that the power of the sexual instinct should be recognised, and its significance in the individual life revealed, is very far from its interest. With a view to discipline, it has rather taken the course of diverting attention from the whole field. For this reason, the revelations of psycho-analysts are not tolerated by it, and it would greatly prefer to brand them as esthetically offensive, morally reprehensible, or dangerous. . . . It is characteristic of human nature, to be inclined to regard anything which is disagreeable as untrue, and then, without much difficulty, to find arguments against it. But such objections are not valid arguments, against conclusions which claim to represent objective results of scientific investigation." What Dr. Freud says is true, and it is desperately hard to rid the mind of prejudice. One must admit the right of the pure scientist to investigate anything; and if this investigation is necessary for the cure of the many moral and nervous disorders which afflict us, we must be grateful to the men who undertake it. But if the claims of Christianity are true, it ought not to be necessary.

We ought to be able to cure these disorders in the name and by the power of Christ. We ought to be able to deliver man from bondage to the carnal mind, which we hold to be at enmity with God. And I do believe that a real religious revival would make the whole of this investigation unnecessary, *from the healing point of view.* That the sex-impulse does play an absolutely leading part in the carnal mind is evident to any casual observer. Its power to dominate and obsess men and women is undoubted and indisputable. But that it is necessary to analyse and to probe into the working of the carnal mind, in order to free man from it, or that it is worth analysing for its own sake, is very doubtful. That this analysis is necessary, is a mere assumption. Christianity declares that the carnal mind can be destroyed by the pouring in of the new life.

With respect to psychological method, Christianity definitely joins itself to the "Suggestionists," as opposed to the "Analysists"—it declares that what the analysist adduces as facts, are not facts at all, but distortions of fact; and that they can be destroyed, without analysing and observing them, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Christian method of cure is, as to its method—Suggestion. The new Nancy school, of which Coué is Moses and Baudouin is Aaron, has rediscovered and re-emphasised the basic element in Faith—that, ultimately, it is what you worship, rather than what you will, that makes you what you are. It is what dominates your imagination, fills your thoughts—what haunts you, so to speak—that determines your character and actions. Baudouin's law of reversed effort merely puts into scientific language the experience of St. Paul, "The good that I will to do—I do not. The evil that I will not to do—I do; O wretched man that I

am! who will deliver me from the body of this death? Thanks be to God Who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ Our Lord." The law of reversed effort is the psychological fact underlying the doctrine of salvation by Faith and not by works. The other name of that doctrine might be, Salvation by worship and not by will. An effort of pure will means a divided mind—part of us suggests that we can—part of us that we can't—and the suggestion of impotence wins. But when a man has found his God, he cries, "I can do all things through Christ Who strengtheneth me." This is the Christian method of salvation. To say that Christianity is only suggestion, is to confuse method with power. Suggestion is a method, not in itself a power; it can be used for evil as well as for good, and indeed is at present much more commonly used for evil than for good. We are subject every day to a continual battery of suggestion. If God works by suggestion, so do the world, the flesh, and the devil, and it is a doubtful point as to how far the analyst, when he cures, does not work by suggestion too—how far it is the continual suggestion of the cure, that in the end has power to heal, rather than the analysis. The problem of the healing of sickness and sin boils down at last to the question of how to overcome evil suggestion by good.

The claim of the Church is, that within the Christian Brotherhood there is the Eternal Life, the Way of Worship, which can, through Faith in and worship of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, completely counter the power of evil suggestion, destroy its results, and set the sinner on his feet again. Nor, thank God, is this claim without evidence to back it. If the Christian Church is weak in positively redemptive work, if she fails to save the sick

and sinful as she should, yet it remains true that she is the greatest preventive power that the world contains against the ravages of sin. Millions of men and women are healed of and preserved from sin and disease of the mind in the early stages, by her ordinary worship, by the ministration of the Word and Sacraments. That is a fact, I think, beyond dispute. What we must realise is, that the tremendous power of mass-suggestion, which we call the world, can only be confronted, and its victims cured, if they are received into a body which is filled with a vivid, vigorous, and conscious community life of the Spirit. Individuals are powerless to cope with a power so subtle and all-pervasive as this mass-suggestion is. If we are to save and rescue sinners, there must grow up in our Church a Spirit of Love and Brotherhood, a Christian community-life, transcending class and national distinctions, as pungent, as powerful, as impossible to escape as the Spirit of the world. No Apostolic Succession, no Ecclesiastical correctness, no rigidity of orthodox doctrine, can by themselves and in themselves give us this; it comes, and can only come, from a clearer vision of the Christ, a more complete surrender to His call and to the bearing of His Cross.

God can and does forgive us our trespasses; but only as we forgive them that trespass against us—that is, only as we become members of a Church really militant here on earth—which is pledged and resolved to bear in its own body the sin of the whole world.

"FATHER, forgive them, for they know not what they do." "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."* Over and over again, He kept on saying it, as the Cross was raised from the ground and dropped into its hole, so that He was thrown forward and the nails wrenched at His hands and feet. He kept on saying it steadily and persistently, with that utter concentration of mind which is the most perfect prayer. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And the prayer was answered. It was no mere aimless and purposeless exclamation; it was a concentrated and earnestly-directed prayer for the healing of His enemies, and the destruction of their sin. And the healing came. The man on His left, who had been railing on Him and cursing Him with the rest, suddenly fell silent, and began, in his agony, to think. He was no common thief, this man; he was a patriot, a rebel, a Jewish Sinn Feiner. He had his dreams of a better Order; in his own way he sought for the Kingdom of God; and for that Kingdom's sake he had robbed and murdered, and had thought himself something of a hero, doubtless, in doing so. But in answer to this prayer, a new power begins to work within his soul, and he sees a new vision. He discovers that there is another King and another Kingdom. "All wrong, all wrong," he

* St. Luke xxiii. 34. The tense in the Greek is Imperfect ëlegen.

says to himself. "How could I have been so blind?" Then out comes his public confession: "We indeed justly; the due reward of our sins." (Not many of us would make so clean a breast of it as that, or feel ourselves as deserving of crucifixion). "But this Man! My God, that is another story! What is there about Him that makes one feel so sure that this Man hath done nothing amiss? I always thought He was a fool until now; there has never seemed to me to be any backbone in His movement. It was all so meek and mild. I heard about the people making a fuss of Him last week, when He came to Jerusalem. He came as a King then, and He looks it, crowned with that crown of thorns. Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." And like a lightning flash the answer comes: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, to-day—thou—with Me—in Paradise."

I believe in the forgiveness of sins. There is the healing power at work. What is it, and how does it work?

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

"Who, for our sakes, in His own body, bare our sins upon the tree." "Him who never knew sin, God made to be sin for us."

"If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins."

"Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world."

These, and a hundred other sayings of the same kind; what do they mean?

"Christ died for us; do we care?" Mr. H. G. Wells asks.

Well, do we? And why should we? What difference does it make?

"The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." What does that mean? Who is this Lord, who lays on the innocent the sin of the guilty? Who burdens the Christ with the sin of the world? What is God like?

The Bible contains many ideas of God. The man who sits down to read it, taking every part of it as equally valid and equally inspired, and endeavours to form from it any sort of idea of what God is like, will rise from his task with a mind in strange confusion; and the more he attempts to reduce it to order, the more will that confusion grow; until it amounts—as, in fact, it has amounted in men's minds—to an utter chaos, which can only echo the hopeless and agnostic cry: "It is higher than heaven, what canst thou do? It is deeper than hell, what canst thou know?"

The attempt to reduce to some sort of order the conflicting ideas of God contained in the Bible, on the basis of the equal inspiration of every part, is the cause of those many theories of the Atonement, which bewilder the man who attempts to probe more deeply into the heart of Calvary. Thank God, none of those theories has ever been made an Article of Faith, and it has never been supposed that salvation was connected with adherence to any particular theory. In this, as in every other question that besets the Christian Faith, the first necessity is somehow to get clear in our minds what God is like. No doctrine can be true which gives us an unworthy idea of God.

To every dogma we must apply the acid test of the Incarnation. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus

Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." *No doctrine is true which makes Jesus less than God, or makes God less than Jesus.* That is the first test of Christian Truth.

A great many of the peculiar dogmas which separate and divide us would be dissolved, under that test, into the nonsense of which they are composed. They make God less good than Jesus.

Supposing it is true that God comes to the Roman Catholic or the Anglican who kneels at the altar, and does not come to the earnest Presbyterian who seeks Him in the Kirk; what is God like? Is He like Jesus? If God forgives the sinner who makes his confession to a Roman Catholic or Anglican Priest, and does not forgive the man who makes it to a Wesleyan Minister who prays with him afterwards, what is God like? Is He like Jesus? If God demands that Jesus should be tortured on the Cross before He can forgive sinners; if the Cross is necessary to turn away His wrath against man; what is God like? Would Jesus make such a demand?

A thousand mysteries begin to clear away, if we cling persistently to that great Name of God which is given by St. John: "God is Love"—the Love that was revealed in Jesus. That is not one of His attributes; that is His very Self. Cling to that Name, and use it, in all these great passages:

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Love hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

"Love, for our sakes, in His own Body bare our sins upon the tree." "Him that never knew sin, Love made to be sin for us."

Doesn't a light begin to break through?

I remember being called upon to visit a man who was in prison for forgery and embezzlement.

He was the queerest, crookedest, hardest-hearted specimen of humanity that it has ever been my luck to strike, and I could not move him an inch nearer repentance. The only sign of softening that he showed at all, was when he asked me to go and see his mother. I went. She came down, looking worn and sleepless, and that I expected. But there was something about her which I, being young, could not understand. She was bitterly ashamed, and in my pity for her I wondered, What has she to be ashamed of ? And then there came the light, and I murmured to myself : Surely she hath borne his griefs and carried his sorrows ; the chastisement of his peace is upon her, and with her stripes he shall be healed, if there be any power that can heal him. He has gone astray and turned to his own way, and Love hath laid on her the iniquity of her son. The mother-heart which knew but little sin, Love hath made to feel exceeding sinful for his sake. I understood and, in a measure, the eternal mystery cleared. That love which a woman can pour out upon her son, and which makes her so entirely one with him, that his sin is her sin, his disgrace is her disgrace, his shame is her shame, is the nearest that we can get upon earth to the love of God ; to what God is.

It was that love, extended to infinity, which beat within the human heart of Christ, God Incarnate, and made Him feel to every man, every woman, and every child in all the world, as that mother felt for her son ; so that our sins became His sins ; our disgrace His disgrace ; our shame His shame ; and in His own Body He bare our sins upon the tree.

This is what forgiveness costs. Forgiveness is love in action, and love means sin-bearing. Forgiveness can only be accomplished by sin-bearing, and sin-bearing means a cross. It means that to God, and it

must mean that to man; for "if any man will be My disciple, let him take up his cross and follow after Me," and the meaning of the Cross is Love bearing the sin of the beloved, because of His unity with him. We call any trouble, even if we bring it upon ourselves, a cross, and many of our bitterest crosses are home-made; but the real cross is Love's suffering for the sake of the beloved. We can only be forgiven, as we bear that cross; we can only be forgiven as we forgive. We can only know the Sin-bearer, as we bear the sins of others. We are redeemed in order to be redeemers, and are not saved until God makes us saviours. The Christian must go with his Lord into the Garden of Gethsemane, and must pass from there to Calvary, filling up in his body what is lacking of the sufferings of Christ, for His Body's sake, which is the Church.

If the Church is a Church indeed, it is a body of sin-bearing people; people who love with the love of God that is shed abroad in their hearts, and who, because they love, are compelled to bear the burden of the world's sins. They are a body of people who can forgive because they are forgiven, who have been loved into being lovers. Unless the Church of Christ is by love so united with the whole of mankind, that the sin of the world is the sin of the Church, the disgrace of the world, the disgrace of the Church, the shame of the world, the shame of the Church—then it is not a Church at all. However highly organised, however doctrinally orthodox, however correct ecclesiastically, it is not a Church, but a counterfeit, if it does not bear the sin of the world.

If the Church exists to bear the sin of the world, then the Church which does not bear sins has no power to absolve them. The true Church is made up of those who do not run away from the Garden of

Gethsemane. There are many gates out of that Garden; but for the Christian, who is a Christian in truth, they are all locked.

There is the gate by which the Pharisee went out; the Gate of Contempt. He judged others that he might escape from judging himself; he sought by self-righteous condemnation to escape being condemned; he was a religious individualist, and separated himself, as his name implies, from the brotherhood of mankind. Partly the Pharisee is blind, and partly he is afraid. He is afraid to love, because he would have to suffer in some form or other. It is always fear that drives men out of the Garden; as, on that dreadful night, it was out of fear that they all forsook Him and fled.

There are many kinds of Pharisees.

There is the Pharisee of the Study; who sits with his lamp burning late into the night, and explains in perfectly polished phrases exactly where the world is wrong, and why it is that only a very few—including himself, of course—can possibly be saved; showing with great self-satisfaction how certain it is that there will never be any inconvenient crowding outside the narrow gate.

There is the Catholic Pharisee, who regards everybody who does not go to confession as in some strange way beyond the pale of humanity. If people find his services repulsive, and his way of conducting them utterly unedifying, he beams with pride, and regards it as a sign of grace in himself. He meets his fellow-Catholics, and they all flatter and fondle each other, and talk their particular kind of cant. They really are a little herd of animals, snuggling up to one another, as the herd-beast always does, for warmth. Their type of mind has no connection with Christianity.

There is the Extreme Protestant Pharisee, to whom everybody who signs himself with the Sign of the Cross is worse than a heathen, and cannot be a brother.

All these go out of the Garden by the Gate of Contempt, because they are afraid to join that Figure Who lies with His face to the earth, in agony and bloody sweat, refusing to claim any superiority, and only crying in His heart: "How often would I have gathered My children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not."

They are afraid to join the Christ, Who bears the sins of the world. But let us be quite certain of this. Those who leave the Garden by the Gate of Contempt may be Baptised, Confirmed, Communicant, Ordained, Consecrated; they may have gone through every form of ritual and partaken of every Sacrament there is; and yet they are not Christian.

There is the Gate of Pietism; and many go out thereat, with eyes fast closed in prayer, absorbed in an ecstasy of devotion, singing revivalist hymns, repeating enormous prayers, surrounded by mists of incense, and drunk with the smell of altar lilies, with sweet little altar boys swinging censers, with red caps, carpet slippers, and white gloves; doing humble reverence every now and then to the Body of the Lord, still they go out of the Garden, and leave Him there to bear the sins of the world. These are of that countless host who go to Church for comfort, for a sensation, as a refuge from the world; who must have the best of choirs, the most eloquent of preachers, the most perfectly rendered Eucharist before they will go at all; whose religion is purely a personal business, and concerns themselves and God. There is always a crowd round this gate, and in it there are more women than men.

Then there is the Gate of the Cynics. It is a favourite one for men. They hurry out, muttering words of worldly wisdom. It has always been the same. Human nature cannot be changed, and the man who worries over it is a fool. Men are just beasts, with a very thin skin of civilisation; pierce an inch below the surface, and you will find a brute. Doubtless religion is good for the masses, but educated men can't be expected to believe in it; it is all sentiment and wash. You can't get down to any facts there. We are always changing the names of things, but the things remain the same; and in the end each man must look out for himself, and the weak must go to the wall. That is the first law of life and the last one, however much it may be disguised: so the Cynics say.

It is a strange crowd, this crowd that throngs about the Gates of the Garden. There are in it men and women of every sort, but there is one secret thing that binds them all together, a thing that they will not confess even to themselves. They are all of them afraid; afraid to love. They cannot stand looking at that Figure; they cannot face His pain. Down in their uttermost depths they are all common cowards who are afraid to love. Thousands of them attend Churches, but none of them understand the meaning of the Church. They are not forgiven, because they dare not forgive. The real Church is made up of those who have not forsaken Him and fled, but have stayed in the Garden of Gethsemane and have gone with Him to the Cross, because Love hath laid on them the sin of the world, and its sin has become their sin, its sorrow their sorrow, and they are content to bear it; aye, more than content, because they bear it with Him. They are glad. They are glad with the gladness of God.

> **Gladness be with Thee, Helper of the world!**
> **Methinks this is the authentic sign and seal**
> **Of Godship, that it ever waxes glad**
> **And more glad, until gladness blossoms, bursts**
> **Into a rage to suffer for mankind**
> **And recommence at sorrow.**

There is always that joy. Sorrow and joy are not opposites; the one is the soul of the other, and those who are the living Church know that the *Via Pacis* is the *Via Crucis*, and rejoice to walk in it. But for them the Church is not, and never can be, an end in itself; it is a means to an end; a means to the salvation of the world and the building of the Kingdom of God. It is not the Ark of Salvation for themselves, it is the Agent of Salvation for mankind. It is not a refuge of peace, but an army preparing for war. They seek in it, not security, but sacrifice. This is the infallible mark of the Church, the hall-mark of the Cross. And if the sin of our modern slums, and the degradation that they cause; if the sin of our overcrowded, rotten houses, and the ugliness and vice they bring; if the sin of unemployment, with the damnation of body and soul that it means to men and women, boys and girls; if the sin of the heartless, thoughtless luxury at one end, standing out against the squalid and degrading poverty at the other; if the sin of commercial trickery and dishonesty, and wholesale defrauding of the poor; if the sin of prostitution, and the murder of women and children by venereal disease; if the sin of war, the very sin of sins, which is but the bursting into a festering sore of all the filth that the others have bred in years of miscalled peace; if all that is not laid upon the Church as a burden, and Christ's members do not feel it as their own, then the Church is not a Church at all; and no amount of organisation, propaganda, and evangelisation can make it live. It has missed its vocation. It is not

really redeemed, because it is not redeeming. It is not forgiven, because it dares not forgive.

Full forgiveness of sins means deliverance from their guilt, their power, and their consequences; and if that is possible at all, *it is only possible in and through a community* alive in every part with the love of God, that love which is always taking the sin of others on itself. Only in such a community can guilt be transformed into gratitude, the real gratitude which shows itself in the passion of service.

When the miracle of the forgiveness of sins has actually taken place, and the man or woman has seen God in His glory, as the forgiven sinner always does, and has risen out of the depths of shame and darkness of guilt into which that vision always plunges him—the next stage is to love much, because much has been forgiven. Guilt must pour itself out in gratitude; and unless that gratitude is to waste away in emotion and evaporate into sentiment, it must take form in practical service, in positive attack upon the forces of evil; and so the forgiven sinner is always a soldier in Christ's Church militant here on earth.

Only in and through a sin-bearing community, alive with the love of God, can the power of sin over the sinner be really and permanently broken. The individual standing alone is not strong enough to resist the force of mass-suggestion which the world brings to bear upon him. The carnal mind can only be met with the mind of Christ, the life of the world with the life of Christ; and that life is a community life, ministered through and in the Christian brotherhood; and it is only as you become a member of a vigorous Christian community, that the power of sin can be finally broken. That is what we all find by experience. It is ever restoration to the Christian family that brings the power of the transformed life.

There is no evangelist who does not, if he produces any permanent results, graft his converts on to a body of the redeemed. Without that, he knows that the vision may come, and fade away; that the hope may be conceived, but die before it comes to birth. The life is in the body.

The consequences of sin, it would seem at first sight, can never be altered; since what is done can never be undone, and the past is past for ever. But when we think more deeply, we can see that consequences are largely capable of being altered and done away. The past is not only past, it is nothing, it actually does not exist, except in so far as it lives in the present. The importance of the past to us is, that it is not past, but is part of the present, and its effect upon us in the present depends upon our attitude towards it. If God changes that attitude, He does indeed change the past for us; and that is what He is for ever doing. He completely changes the effect of the past, as it exists in the present; turning the sin, which once bound us in chains, into a goad to drive us into righteousness; turning what was the cause of our pride into the chief ground of our humility. "For I am the least of all the apostles, and am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God, and yet His Grace which was bestowed upon me was not bestowed in vain, for I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me."

As, through the living body, He pours in the new life, He does in many cases actually heal the consequences of sin, bringing to the individual penitent restored health and vigour, and transforming his weakness and remorse into a passion for grateful service—but this can only be done through the body.

Moreover, it is the social consequences of sin that

are the gravest difficulty. The wrong that I did in the world, before I found God ; the girl I corrupted ; the young life I spoiled, and the mother, now dead, whom I wronged. How can forgiveness undo what my sin has done ? It is here, perhaps, that the utter necessity for the community or body of sin-bearers becomes most urgent. By myself I am helpless to undo what I have done ; but united with God, and knit up with the community, I am armed with tremendous power. For the whole of the real Church is in every honest member of it, and his is the power of God ; and, arming myself with that, as I formerly armed myself with the powers of evil, I can by the grace of God strike a blow at the carnal mind, which may go far to undo the evil I have done ; yes, and maybe gather into that very fellowship those whose falling away I partly caused. The repentance of Paul could not bring Stephen back to life, but when they met in the other world, St. Paul must have been St. Stephen's joy and glory. When I and the one I wronged meet in the presence of God there is no Love like ours. One day my enemies shall be my greatest friends. But it is only as these transformations of guilt into gratitude, of defeat into victory, and of evil consequences into perfect consecration, actually do take place, that sin is really forgiven—and they can only take place in and through a Christian community.

One of the greatest dangers to the sin-bearing fellowship, which is the Church, proceeds from the many counterfeits the world provides ; fellowships and brotherhoods galore. Man is not naturally social ; he is naturally gregarious, which is a different thing. He by nature lives in a herd, as cows or wolves do. He is not a solitary animal, like a cat. You will find, therefore, that men being gregarious would rather live with people whom they hate and

detest, constantly slander, backbite, and endeavour to injure—they would rather live and quarrel every day—than live alone. Loneliness they cannot stand. So by a tyrannous instinct we are driven to form cliques and sections, and our behaviour in these cliques and sections is the same as that of beasts in herds. The individual beasts in a herd will fight with one another for a piece of flesh; bulls will strive for their mates to the death, until a common enemy or danger threatens their herd. Then, for a while, they will drop their quarrels, and fight or flee together, united by a common fear, and a common hatred. That is precisely the way in which members of a nation behave. In time of war we are a nation; in time of peace, so-called, we are a mob. We fight with one another until common hatred and common fear unite us, and then we stand together only as long as that fear and hatred last. What we call patriotism, is at its roots very little else but the instinct of the herd. The nations are herds, and the navies and armies are their teeth and claws. In time of war, under the drive of this ancient instinct, men will give their life-blood to the nation; in time of peace, they will do the Government out of sixpence if they possibly can, and their country is the very last thing they work for. Nor are the nations the only herds of men and women. Men in great Trade Unions, in large Employers' Federations, in Political Parties, behave in the same utterly irrational and bestial way; and, alas! the mark of the beast is not absent from the Churches.

Who does not know of the jealousy and bitterness that can break out, even among those who are closest to the Altar, or of the backbiting and slandering that is all too common in Christian congregations? Who does not know how constantly good work is hindered,

by the fact that this person cannot work with that person, or that Mr. Smith will be furiously jealous if Mr. Jones co-operates with him, because then he will no longer be a big frog in a little pool ?

These are the marks of the beast ; and is there not the mark of the beast on our Church divisions too ? Often and often, when I talk to a " good Catholic " about a Nonconformist, or to a Nonconformist about a " good Catholic," I see in their eyes the glint of hatred that comes into the eyes of a beast when he meets a member of another herd. And, as is always the way of beasts, this irrational hatred has mainly to do with outward things, mere details ; the kind of clothes we wear in Church, or the forms of worship which we use. I believe that a pack of black wolves will tear a white wolf to pieces for exactly the same reason, or unreason, that a Protestant hates a Catholic, or a Catholic hates a Protestant. Both of them will give reasons to justify this animal instinct of hatred. We are all marvellous at doing that. We find it easy to write a book to justify a prejudice, and are immensely pleased with the arguments it contains ; but the whole performance in the end is worth as much as the prejudice upon which it is founded, and no more. Whole shelves of our Theological Libraries are taken up with ingenious efforts to rationalise and whitewash irrational prejudices and antagonisms, which at their roots are as purely animal as lust and as destructive of the best that is in mankind.

Our Lord, on the whole, was kind to prostitutes. It was Pharisees, who were marked with this mark of the beast, upon whom He poured out the fires of His wrath ; and He would be the same to-day.

The Church has been eaten up with disputes about non-essentials, and has wasted endless time discussing ridiculously irrelevant matters, because it has left

its Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane, and has not been bearing the sin of the world. But, thank God, there are signs that love is not dead, signs that God has yet left Him seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and the lips that have not kissed him. The Church is waking to a sense of her task, and is hearing the call of her Lord to take up the burden of the world's sin. She does feel that she is shamed by the world in which she lives, that it is a reproach to the Gospel; and that is a movement of life. When she begins to bear the sin of the world, she will begin to save sinners.

What is sometimes called the social message of the Church, is not one department of its Gospel, and its individual message another; they are one. Either is nothing without the other.

For years we were saved from utter extinction, as a Church, by our Foreign Missions, our extremely feeble attempt to bear the sin of the heathen world. That attempt just managed to keep us alive. Even when we spent £180 on the choir and organ, and sent £30 to Missions; it was something. But that can't keep us alive much longer, unless we take up the burden of the sin of the so-called Christian world, and our own social and industrial order. More and more it becomes impossible to divide the Church's work abroad from the Church's work at home, or the problem of one from the problem of the other. We can only be saved by seeing the two as one, and shouldering the burden. This is the quintessence of true Catholicity. With the essence of Catholicism, ritual and forms and ceremonies have really nothing to do; they are *et ceteras*. So also are the devotional practices of Reservation, Benediction, etc. Catholicity is the response to the call of God to bear the sin of the whole world, and consecrate every department of life

to Jesus Christ, as Son of God and rightful Lord and Master of mankind. It is, as the word signifies, the claim to inspire the whole life of all men in all the world.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God must issue in and be expressed through the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit; and this means the redemption of all purely human fellowships, the raising of them all from the animal and instinctive level to the rational and truly human level. The trouble is that our unities are still instinctive unities. Our family life is still based too much on the sex instinct pure and simple, our factories too much on the acquisitive instinct pure and simple, our cities and our nations on the herd instinct pure and simple. This animal and irrational basis is not strong enough, or wide enough, to stand the pressure of the new environment of material unity which God has created for us, and it is breaking down. A wider and stronger basis of unity must be found, if human society is to be saved from disintegration on a world-wide scale. It is this wider and stronger basis of unity which the Church must provide, that within the Kingdom of God all human instincts may find their true harmony, and their highest development. Within the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the family, the factory, the city, and the nation must find their true relation to one another, and it is the duty of the Church to demonstrate that this can be done. But this demonstration can only be made by a Church which has really taken upon herself the burden of the world's sin and sorrow, and by the power of the Holy Spirit has raised her own fellowship up to the highest and purest level; a Church which is at once Holy—utterly consecrated, and Catholic—utterly and infinitely Loving, a Church which, like her Lord, is at once fully human and divine.

The cry that is often raised, that we are going to secularise religion, and take the clergy away from their "purely spiritual" work, is the cry of the man who dare not face the Cross. He wants to keep his Christ for ever standing amid the lilies of the altar, with the sweet incense of worship rising round Him, a weekly refuge from a distraught and vulgar world. He wants to lock Christ up in the Tabernacle, to keep Him in the silence of the secret place, where men must go down on their knees before they touch Him. But Christ wants to come out into the market-place, and down to the streets; He wants to eat and drink with prostitutes, to be mocked and spit upon by soldiers. He wants to call the dishonest trader from his office desk; to stand at his lathe beside the workman; and to bend with the mother over the washtub in the city of mean streets. He wants to go out into the world, that beauty and goodness and truth—beautiful things, good people, and true thought—may grow up around Him wherever He goes. You cannot keep Christ in your Churches; He will break them into pieces if you try. He will make for the streets in spite of you, and go on with His own work; defying dead authorities, breaking down tyrannies, destroying shams, declaring open war against a Godless world. And wherever He goes the true Church will go with Him—the Church of those who are forgiven because they are bearing the sins of the world, and have learned how to forgive.

X *Lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil*

As we utter the familiar words with which the great prayer closes, many of us, if we begin to think of them, become conscious of a difficulty about their meaning. Does God lead us into temptation? Are we to suppose that God tempts us? and, if He does, must it not be for our good, and ought we to ask Him not to do so? So long as He leads us, ought we not rather to defy temptation? If we are to be sin-bearers, ought we not to seek out conflict with sin? Ought we not to challenge and conquer, secure in His protection? and ought we not to be able, in the power of His Grace, to make some bolder prayer than this cry for "safety first"? But there is no real difficulty. We are still in the Garden of Gethsemane. That is where we ought to be. The prayer is the exact parallel to His prayer, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will but as Thou wilt." "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." There is in both those cries, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," and "Lead us not into temptation," the same loathing of sin, the same shrinking of the soul from all contact with it, the same spiritual repulsion from its ugliness and dirt. In both prayers, the reality and urgency of stress is upon the last part—"Not as I will, but as Thou wilt," and "Deliver us from evil." Men have misunderstood the prayer in the Garden, and have made the tremendous aspira-

tion, "Not as I will but as Thou wilt," into an act of pure submission, interpreting the Will of God as the Cross. But we must once more think clear and straight about God's Will. God did not and could not will the Cross. He did not and could not will the awful tragedy of Calvary, which summed up in itself all the loathsome degradation of which humanity is capable, and all the ugliness of sin. God could not and did not will the Cross; but He did and could will the Christ Who bore it. It is in the Christ, not in the Cross, that we see God's Will revealed. God was leading the Christ into temptation, He was bringing Him into contact with evil, once more He was being driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil; and the Spirit that drives is the Spirit of Love—the love which makes Him one with the men who betray, forsake, mock, spit upon and scourge Him, degrading and disgracing human nature. The Spirit of Love made their sin His sin, and their disgrace His disgrace, because it made Him one with them.

We have seen that sin is always at its root a break in the unity of man with God, and it was to that root of all sin that the Son of Man was tempted in the Garden. As the flesh and humanity of Jesus shrank back from the horror of sin-bearing, there rose up before Him the possibility of what He knew must never, never be—a break between Him and the Father. Always, throughout His whole life, that possibility had been there for Him—as it is for us—sometimes so far away as to appear non-existent, sometimes so near as to be almost a reality. Now it is very near, so near that it has to be met and overcome. He is preparing His Soul for that ghastly Three Hours struggle in the silence and the dark, at the end of which, and not until the end, He looked up, as the sun broke through the clouds dispersing

the gloom, and said, "My God, My God, why didst Thou forsake Me?" It was the agony of possible separation that He shrank from and prayed against. It was the possibility of that rift which caused Him to be sore amazed and very heavy. The first part of the prayer is, in a sense, not so much a prayer as an expression of what He must pray against—that which has to be overcome—that loathing of contact with evil which is characteristic of the soul redeemed. It is always there in the perfect soul—and must always be overcome. It is not for nothing that God sets out two great commandments and not merely one—first, that the soul redeemed must love God with all its being, and, secondly, that it must love man. For there is a real temptation, in many ways the most tragic and terrible temptation of all, which comes to those who love God, who really love the good, the beautiful, and the true—the temptation to shrink from the ordinary carnal, sensual, greedy, cruel man, to shrink from contact with the world, and to shirk the distinct call to bear its sin. It is that temptation which Christ had to meet in the Garden; and it is that temptation which we have to meet every day, by the same power, and with practically the same prayer on our lips.

God does lead us into this temptation every day; and we must follow. He calls us to the Cross every day, and we must bear it. But just in proportion as we live for Him, and with Him, and have found in His Presence the fulness of joy, and at His right Hand pleasure for evermore, and therefore know the glory of life, and perceive how much we stand to lose through sin, and how much there is at stake in our manhood—just in proportion as we have the fulness of God's Grace, we shall be reluctant to court temptation, and afraid to meet it carelessly. The brave man

is no fool. It is the boy who has never been in a battle, who goes to it lightly and with a careless heart. It is the hero of many fights and many victories, who goes to it with caution, with eyes wide open to the danger that he runs; conscious that he stands not for himself alone, but for the men who follow on, who follow and march with him, for whom he is responsible. The nearer we live to God, the more we shall hate and detest the very shadow of evil; and the more it will be to us the shadow of the Cross, the more we shall pray, "Lead us not into temptation"—though never, of course, without the supreme act of aspiration which is the real prayer, "If in course of duty, O God, temptation comes, then, deliver us from evil."

We have got into the way of calling all our misfortunes, disappointments, and even minor sorrows, "crosses"; but it is not a good habit, because it blinds our eyes to the real meaning of the Cross, and of suffering with Christ. We believe it to be true that there is no suffering, nobly borne, which does not, in some measure, help to lift the world; but the real suffering with Christ is the suffering for the sins of the world, of the man, who loves God and loves mankind. And in order to be even conscious of that cross as a cross, we have to live near the Christ; we have to desire for men what He desired for them, and to see in men what He saw in them. We have to receive and accept that love of God shed abroad in our hearts, which makes us so love ordinary men, that we feel to any man who is a drunkard what we should feel toward our own sons if they were drunkards; that we feel to every woman who is a prostitute, what we should feel to our own daughters, whom as children we took upon our knees in the beauty of their innocence, if they were

prostitutes. We have to feel toward the man who is covetous and a lover of money, what we should feel toward a son of our own who turned, from the high ideals of human service, and the splendour of self-sacrifice, which we held up to him in his boyhood, to some mean, cowardly and cruel form of money-grabbing. That is the real cross. It is a misfortune if a man's son dies, and if he bears that nobly, he helps to lift the world; but it is a cross if the man's son sins, and he, by loving, saves him; and the finer and the whiter the man is, the more terrible that cross will be, and the more terrible the temptation it will carry with it, the temptation to turn either from God or Man. The white man hates sin, because it stinks, even when it is drenched with expensive perfumes, and clothed in silks and satins. If it be refined and disguised by letters and by learning, in such a way as to deceive any but the very elect, still the white man recognises it, and hates it, because it stinks.

And so, the nearer we get to God, the more earnestly we shall cry, "Lead us not into temptation."

In these days, we live in a state of radical and wholesale reaction against what we call Victorian hypocrisy and pretence. We pride ourselves on our superiority. We are realists, not idealists. We desire to face the facts. There is no use in pretending that the world is different from what it is, we say; better to live in hell than in a fool's paradise. And so we have grown reckless about temptation. To the pure all things are pure, we say; and we proceed to go anywhere, read everything, look at anything, and fear nothing. We entirely agree with St. James that "Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction," for we are nothing if not philanthropic; but as to keeping ourselves "unspotted from

the world," our hold on that is very slender. It is an ideal, and nothing more. We scoff at the timidity of a religion which bids us remember that we have a soul to save, and that we must preserve ourselves from taint. We are brave, indeed; but it is very doubtful whether we are wise. If our Victorian fathers were hypocrites and unconscious fools, it is doubtful if we are very much better. The pendulum has swung back, but it is the same old clock, and we have not really changed. In some ways we are bigger hypocrites and bigger fools than our Victorian fathers, and doubly self-deceived, because we know, or ought to know, more of the dangers that we run. All the knowledge which we now possess, of the power of suggestion, and the supremacy of the imagination in the spiritual life, ought to warn us that reckless realism is the high road to lunacy; it ought to warn us, but it does not seem to do so. Modern realism is a highly-paid profession. Our realists not only face facts, they manufacture them. They not only see dirt, they are actually dirty. They paint the world black with the filth they find in their own souls. It is the realism of second-rate art which, because it has neither the skill nor the technique to touch the finer chords of human nature and awaken their music into life, makes a frank appeal to the crude animal instincts. These instincts are always there, and can always be relied upon to give a certain thrill, posing as that sting of poignant pleasure or of piercing pain, with which, in the hand of the true artist, real beauty whips to life our human souls. It is always the line of least resistance for the artist to appeal to some strong primitive instinct, and so make sure of a response. The true mission of the artist, which is to educate and control public taste, and not merely to follow and pander to it, is an arduous and thankless one, and

not profitable from the commercial point of view. There is therefore a tremendous temptation to prostitute his art whatever it be, and be content with a crude sensationalism. It pays—and the artist must live. It is to this temptation that many of our modern realists have, consciously or unconsciously, submitted. It is partly, no doubt, the result of the war, which was a throw-back to barbarism; for in that barbarism we openly rejoiced. This is real life, we said, life with a capital L. This is life without the varnish, human nature as it truly is. Take away the artificialities of civilisation, and this is what men are. We had a lot of realistic books, telling us the truth about life, and casting all reserve to the winds. Needless to say, it was all self-deception and nonsense, modern war being the most damnably artificial condition into which men could be put—cut off from their womankind, herded together in great droves like cattle, pelted with tons of iron, living half their time like rabbits in funk-holes, in constant terror of their lives, or going down to the Base for a period of perpetual boredom, during which they were hunted round the streets by hysterical or avaricious women. Our realists tried to convince us that this was "honest" life. And they wrote splendid "honest" books about it, what publishers call courageous and outspoken books, giving daring revelations of the truth; and the theory is, that because to the pure all things are pure, therefore we can read them, and it will do us no harm. Of all the balderdash and barefaced hypocrisy that has ever been propagated in the name of truth, that probably is the worst. To suppose you can souse yourself in sensuality, sentimentality, and the general atmosphere of the woman on the streets for hours at a time, and come out unscathed, has got less foundation than most of the other baseless lies upon which

we live. If the truth about life were what it is portrayed to be, in our realist fiction, and realist press—then, all that Jesus taught is a tissue of lies; and on the whole I prefer Jesus Christ to the greatest modern realist alive. As Mr. Alfred Noyes has said, "In the name of 'reality' many writers are indulging in shabby forms of make-believe, and are reducing all reality to ashes."

> This poet parasite of grief
> Lives on the falling, leaf by leaf,
> Of life's illusion, glad to see
> The nakedness of misery.
> He probes his pen deep down within,
> To make a sonnet of a sin.
> A Realist, revealing less
> Life's beauty than its bitterness.
> Yet purer eyes than his have seen
> Truth in these fields of living green,
> And truer hearts than his have trod
> White ways of wonder up to God.
> Lord, touch my lips that I may sing
> The music of men's hallowing.
> Touch Thou my soul that I may know
> Life's worth more real than its woe.

It is perfectly true that to the pure all things are pure, but you have to be extremely certain of your purity, and which of us is? Not I. "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips," and I have jolly well got to take care; and if you have got any sense, friend reader, so have you. You may suppose that what you read and see flows off your mentality like water off a duck's back; but it does not, it sticks; and therefore, if you are wise, you will still be sufficient of a Victorian and a Christian to pray, "Lead us not into temptation," as well as "Deliver us from evil."

Yet you have got to meet temptation, mind you. Unfortunately, in this world, you do not need

to seek dirt to find it; you get it chucked at you, chucked at you as you walk right straight along the path of righteousness. And if it be really true that you cannot touch pitch without being defiled, you have got to risk defilement; for love will not let you escape touching pitch. But let us be clear about this. Temptation is not sin. Being attacked is not being defeated; and God, Who leads us into temptation, can and will deliver us from evil. *Only we must stick to God.* We must stick to prayer, to worship, and to communion. We must strive to keep ourselves so, that when the prince of this world comes, and calls us to the mean, the double-faced, and the unclean, he shall find nothing in us. We must rise from our knees and go out into the world; but we must not go out into the world without rising from our knees. We must not dare to live a day, or spend a week, without seeking strength to live and spend them on the highest level; and asking Christ to deliver us from temptation, by so dwelling in us, and so filling us with the fulness of His Peace and Joy, that there is no room for anything else. But if He is to do that, we must continually come back, and seek voluntarily to put ourselves into communion and contact with beauty, goodness, and truth. We must seek to build within ourselves a place of silence, into which we can at will retreat; and there seek God, and lay at His Feet the temptation that has to be met with, and the problem that has to be solved. The possession of this place of silence is one of the secrets of personality; and it is in personality above all other things that our present world is poor. Men go about the world, and the thunder and the roar of it get into the very secret places of their souls; and they live for ever in the midst of a blatant and vulgar noise, which poisons

the spirit, perverts the judgment and destroys the balance of the intellect, sapping away the foundations of personal freedom, and of fine character. Such a result we have to avoid at all costs. That is the whole object and aim of going to Church. You go to Church, in order that you may take the Church away with you. We have come to think of going to Church as synonymous with listening to sermons. We rail about the dulness of sermons; but we won't go to Church unless they are preached; and that is largely because we have lost the secret of worship. We must have what we call a congregational service, in which we can all join, *i.e.*, in which we can all make a noise. We must have popular hymns and popular Psalms, and we cannot say our Creed unless we all join in. If a very exquisite choir sings the Creed, or chants the Psalms, we say that the Service is not a hearty one, and is not real worship. But, you know, that is all wrong, and it won't do. I never get time to say my Creed properly, unless a choir sings it; in the ordinary way of saying it, it goes too quickly; and I never study the Psalms with so much advantage as when they are beautifully chanted. To suppose that God listens to the noise that we make in Church, and not to the silent worship of our souls, makes nonsense of our relations with Him. There is nothing that is more necessary for our souls' salvation than that we should learn, in Church and out of Church, to be still and know that He is God. It is only in the stillness that that great knowledge comes. I think, perhaps one of the things in which we clergy have failed the people most, is in our failure to teach them how to be quiet, and to understand the joy of inward silence. The kind of Christianity without Christ, religion without worship, which is so fashionable to-day—the pursuit of the popular preacher as

an end in himself, poor beggar, as though he could throw open the doors of God's Kingdom, and set you safely in your place—the religion which makes a tremendous fuss about visiting the widow and orphan in their affliction, but does not even know that there are spots to keep yourself from—is not Christianity; and all the cant that is talked about living a good life without caring or bothering about God, is a caricature of the teaching of Jesus Christ. We need a really spiritual revival, which will call us not merely to the high, but to the highest; to the best and the finest that we know or can know, which is in Him. Popular preaching there must be, and I must go on doing it; but it must be preaching that leads us into His Presence, and into the silence where He dwells, and where His Sacrifice is offered—or it will be vain preaching, however popular it is. If ever I have sought popularity for popularity's sake, may God forgive me, and have mercy on my soul.

There never was so great a need, as there is to-day, for personal religion—conscious contact of the individual soul with that soul's Saviour. The call to redeem the world—the call of the full social message to the building of the Kingdom—means not less, but more, personal sanctification; not less, but more care and caution, lest we, who preach and seek to save others, should ourselves become castaways. And yet, true as that is, we must not interpret, "Lead *us* not into temptation, but deliver *us* from evil," as though it were "Lead *me* not into temptation, but deliver *me* from evil." Urgent and pressing as the need of personal religion is, we should, we must, strive for all we are worth to prevent evil being thrown in the way of those weaker brethren, who, like us, have souls to save. We can have no truck with that abominable hypocrisy by which people who want to make

money out of the weakness of others defend themselves, on the ground that they are providing spiritual gymnasiums for the exercise of the muscles of self-control. The benevolent brewer, who protects his dividends with the Peeksniffian plea that it is bad for the people's souls to interfere with the liberty of the subject and restrict the opportunities of drink, we must estimate at his true worth; which is that of all liars, conscious or unconscious. Those who, under cover of the freedom of the Press, present for the edification of the proletariat a hotchpotch of all the garbage that can be collected from the divorce courts, together with detailed accounts of the private lives of criminals and crooks, we must uncompromisingly declare to be the enemies of God's people. Just as we must hunt down and destroy the people who traffic in opium and cocaine, so must we hunt down and destroy these parasites of the free Press, who poison the minds of the people. We must oppose ourselves relentlessly to all false and superficial ideas of education; and first of all, to the idea that education is confined to schools, and that factories, mills, workshops, theatres, streets, and the homes of the people are not educational institutions. Knowing, as we do, that the factor of suggestion is far more potent educationally than the factor of information, we can have no sympathy with the present-day over-emphasis on the intellect in the training of old and young. The actual information, imparted in our schools, matters much less than the atmosphere in which it is imparted; and the atmosphere of the schools matters much less than the atmosphere of those places in which our people, of necessity, spend the greater part of their lives. The factory exists, not merely to produce cotton, but to produce character. This may not be business, but it

is truth. To produce a great quantity of cotton at the expense of a bad quality of character, is to produce, not wealth, but poverty. Constantly we must cry, over our working-people, "Lead them not into temptation, but deliver them from evil"; and we must remember that the answer to our prayer will come in the inspiration that God gives us, so to order their working conditions, so to tackle and solve the intricate problems which industry presents, that it may become the means of producing, not quantities of cheap goods, but multitudes of fine people. Nobody wants grandmotherly legislation, or any attempt to produce virtue by law; but we must see to it that vested interests and money power do not prevent the real voice of the people from being heard, and their real will to better things having its effect. Too often what is called public opinion is merely Press opinion, and paid for at that. The Free Press is not really free. It lives very largely on its advertisements, and those who can afford huge sums for advertisement, inasmuch as they pay the piper, can largely call the tune. There are few problems so difficult and so pressing as the securing of a really free Press. For the Education of the people the journalist is at least as important as the schoolmaster and the preacher. To restrict the idea of vocation to the Priesthood is a ruinous business, men are just as much called to be captains of industry, politicians, journalists, actors, musicians, and artists as they are to be Bishops or Curates. That the very best that is in the people should be enabled to get out, and make its effect, is the great necessity of all progress; and if this is to be so, we must cease to imagine that there is a special class of teachers to whom alone belongs the task of education. We must remember that, in a democracy, we educate one another for good or for ill, and that

every one of our institutions should be prepared to abide by the test of its educational results. Neither the turnover, nor the dividend, nor the profits, give us the terms in which we must estimate the success or failure of a business; that can only be estimated in terms of living people.

At present we do strange and wonderful things. We spend millions of money and an immense amount of energy and time in the combat with venereal disease, and in the maintenance of the defective, idiotic, blind, and crippled children that are the product of vice. We know how tremendous the strength of sexual passion is; and yet we allow ourselves and our children to be exploited wholesale, by those who make money out of appealing to and artificially stimulating it. It is now proposed, as a remedy for the evil, that we should give our children detailed instruction upon the facts of sex; as though information would in itself give them power of control! I am far from denying that to give children good and decently presented instruction about the facts of life, at the proper age, is of great assistance to them, and is much better than allowing them to learn a distortion of those facts from dirty sources; but the idea that, in and by itself, instruction will keep them pure and clean, has no foundation in fact; and we are tackling the problem very largely at the wrong end. If we want to produce clean people, we must give them decent houses, decent factory conditions, decent wages, and the sense that they work, not merely for their wage, but for their country and their God. Moreover, we have forgotten that evil is infectious, as infectious as small-pox; and we do not perceive that if we allow whole departments of our life to become purely secular, and to create and maintain moral or immoral standards of their own, in time the whole of life is

bound to become corrupt. We do not perceive how what we call "business morality" undermines all morality, and tends to destroy it. Until it comes to pass that the Christian commandment forbidding us overreach and defraud one another, instead of being an elementary principle of social life, acted upon as a matter of course, has come to be regarded as a highfalutin ideal which everybody pretends to honour, and no one believes it possible to attain, and it is often impossible for a decent boy to go into business without being led unnecessarily into temptation. We can lie in business, we can lie in war, we can lie in politics, we can lie in commerce—get that far, and there soon won't be anywhere where we cannot lie. The law of love is not allowed to operate in business, or in war, or in politics, or in finance; very soon it won't apply to anything. The sanctity of vows has ceased to apply to marriage, or to treaties between nations, or to agreements between employers and employees; in fact, it is a little doubtful where it does apply—certainly nowhere where its application is in the least inconvenient—we tend to regard it as ridiculous, to keep a vow once it hurts us. A man may be "blessed" who swears to his neighbour and disappoints him not, though it were to his own hindrance; but he is not business-like.

So always, everywhere, we go on our way, trying to make the world comfortable, and avoid the cross of principle, or bearing it until it hurts and then throwing it down; but sooner or later there must come a change. If you seek to escape the discipline of faith, you must submit to the discipline of facts. If you will not submit to the hardships of order, you must face the horrors of anarchy; and that applies to the individual soul, to the state, and to the world. The standards of Christ are not arbitrary ideals for excep-

tional men, they are the bedrock necessities of social life, we disobey at our peril. If we leave God we can only go into the world without God, and that world knows nothing of mercy or pity, it is as brutal, as bestial, as Russia or Ireland has been in these latter years. It is a world where children are tortured, women dishonoured, and homes destroyed as callously and carelessly as a dog kills a rat. And so just because we hate evil, just because we know how perilous its poison is, and how awful is the risk that, as individuals and communities, we run if once the poison in our blood goes too deep—therefore we must be constantly praying, and acting on our prayer, "Lead us not into temptation," as well as "Deliver us from evil." If there is in any country a solid body of people who are living with God and holding fast to Him, their life can, for a while, support a large number of careless and godless moral parasites who feed upon their vitality; *but once the parasites get the upper hand, the body politic becomes rotten and is destroyed;* and there is a very real danger in these days lest the parasites may get the upper hand. Because we love and fight for the "bottom dog," there is no need to sentimentalise over him, and paint him as an angel. The bottom dog is very often a thoroughly "dirty dog," ignorant, credulous, cruel, and full of hatred. The fact that it is not altogether his fault does not make him any different from what he is, or any less dangerous, nor does the fact that it is partly his own fault relieve us of responsibility for him. To point out that the bottom dog is often lazy, thriftless, incompetent and loose, and then dismiss him with a shrug of the shoulders, is the attitude of a fool. All this applies with equal force to many of the top dogs, who have reached the top, but still remain dogs and dirty ones. That they should be at the top is a greater

peril than that the others should be at the bottom. It is easy to get out of the trouble by sweeping generalisations which enable you to take sides and shift the blame to someone else. It is easy to say that the workers are work-shy, and the employers greedy, and so turn the problem into a battle. It is always easy to get out of thinking and praying by fighting, always easy—and always useless and mean. But with that sort of nonsense Christianity can have nothing to do. Always and ever we must be making an effort, so to order our world that our people be not led into temptation; and so to educate them, that, in such temptations as they must meet, they will have God to deliver them from evil.

The greatest need of our time is an increase in true religion; an increase of that steadily-burning, persistent passion for private and public righteousness, which comes to the man or woman who really lives with God and really prays.

Somebody wrote to me the other day, and said that I was wasting my time, trying to produce British saints, because the national ideal was not that of a British saint, but of a British sportsman; and he hinted that, really in my heart of hearts, I knew that, and had it as my own ideal of life. There is much of kinship between the sportsman and the saint. Both are gamblers, who bet their lives upon a great chance. To the true sportsman, life is a great game and he bets his brain, muscle, and blood, if need be, that his side will win; and a saint is one who plays the game on its highest level, with God for his leader and righteousness for his cause, and everything he possesses for the stakes. The two ideals are not incompatible, but complementary. It is right that we should take life as a great game, but utterly wrong that we should imagine that games are life. That is just one of many

idolatries. Football is the most popular religion in England to-day ; but it will not save us either in body or in soul. We need a bigger game and higher stakes. Gambling, like all vices, is the perversion of a virtue ; and the sportsmen of the lower level, who hang about our street corners buying up the sporting editions, are perverted saints, betting their pitiful poverty upon petty issues, for the sake of passing excitement—instead of staking all the wealth and the glory of life to attain a great and lasting achievement.

Plato calls immortality (which to him, as to Christ, was eternal life beginning now and ending never) " a glorious venture "—a splendid gamble.

That is the root of the sin of gambling, it is the perversion of the instinct of adventure and enterprise, an instinct which is one of our most priceless possessions. Upon that instinct real progress does, and must always, depend, and to find an outlet for it on a mean and trivial level is individually and socially disastrous. All sin is perverted instinct, and there is no sin which is more pregnant with moral ruin than this. The Christian who compromises with gambling is a fool and a traitor to his Lord.

We need God to make our sportsmen saints, and our would-be saints into real sportsmen, who know life to be a glorious battle with the chance of everlasting victory, and who go to it with the cry of the Good Soldier on their lips, " Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.

And sitting down they watched Him there,
The Soldiers did.
There, while they played with dice,
He made His sacrifice,
And died upon the Cross to rid
God's world of sin.

He was a gambler too,
My Christ,
He took His life and threw
It for a world redeemed.
And e'er His agony was done
Before the westering sun went down,
Crowning that day with its crimson crown
He knew
That He had won.

XI *For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory*

In this weird world of wild uncertainty, in which we argue about everything and agree about nothing—when everybody on earth appears to be asking questions, and nobody either in Heaven or earth appears to be answering them—there does appear to be, at any rate, one point upon which all but the most thoughtless of us are agreed ; and that is, the need of a new Spirit. From every pulpit and from every platform in the land, preachers and politicians have vied with one another in proclaiming that the only thing that can save us from disaster, the only power by which a new world can be built up upon the ruins of the old, is the power of a new Spirit. It has been said so often, that men are sick of hearing it ; some of us have said it so often, that we are sick of saying it. I can see before me now, as I write, thousands and thousands of patient English faces, gathered in great crowds and sitting in hushed attentive silence, while I or someone else proclaims to them the absolute necessity of this new Spirit.

There is a hunger for it all over the land, and men and women are drawn together in crowds in the hope of satisfying that hunger with food ; but very often, it must be admitted, they go away with their hunger more sharpened than satisfied, because their leaders have rather proclaimed a famine than given food. And although it is something to intensify that hunger, something to make conscious and articulate the

dumbly crying need, something to set men seeking, for only those who seek can find, only those who ask can hope to have, and only to those who knock, and keep on knocking, can the gates of God's eternal treasure-house of Love be opened wide; it is something, but it is not enough. Proclaiming a famine is not giving men food. That you and I should sit down and agree that we are starving, is not the same thing as sitting down to a good square meal; and often and often, at the close of some great meeting, when the silent attention and grateful applause of some large audience have shown them to be hungry for the Spirit, I have come down from the platform or the pulpit, muttering to myself, "This is all very well, but it is not the right stuff. Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat? Where are we going to get this new Spirit, and when is it going to come?"

It does seem fairly plain, that the Spirit we want is just the Spirit of which the New Testament is full. If we could get it really working, and running like a fire through this new world of rapid communication—if it could be breathed into this gigantic body that commerce and industry have built up, it would give us the life we need. What we want, is Pentecost. We have wanted it for some time, but it does not seem to come. Why? What's the matter? What can we do to make ourselves fit for Pentecost? Whence comes this Spirit for which men hunger?

At first sight it would seem that what we call the Nicene Creed supplies some sort of answer: "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son."

I can imagine a man feeling, as I did, that behind those great symbolic words there ought to lie an answer to the vast question of the world's soul; and

I can imagine him turning to the theologians, or going into a theological library, to search out the exact meaning of the words. But God help the poor fellow if he did! He would find himself plunged immediately into the midst of one of the bitterest and most barren theological controversies that has ever torn the Body of Christ asunder. He would find himself surrounded by a babel of voices, shouting conflicting interpretations and explanations at him; he would go back to a world as full of argument as the one in which he lives, and be called upon to follow the acutest intellects through a maze of brain-racking metaphysical distinctions and hair-splitting controversial differences—until I can imagine him banging down the books on the table, or throwing them into a corner in his impatience, and going away muttering to himself, "Good Lord of Love and Beauty, what's the use of all this in a world of starving souls?"

Merely reading the history of this clause of the Creed makes one's brain reel, and the cold sweat of utter bewilderment breaks out upon one's brow, as one strives to follow the very human doctors of Divinity in their efforts to settle the exact relationship of the persons of the Blessed Trinity. No sooner does one escape from one heresy, than another bites one in the back; and the last state is worse than the first. Mr. G. K. Chesterton, in a fine passage of his "Orthodoxy," draws a picture of Orthodoxy as a splendid, swaying figure, standing upon two wild, but superbly-controlled horses, and sweeping down the course of time with the sprawling heresies lying prone on either side. But the attempt to be orthodox on the subject of the Blessed Trinity, and at the same time intelligible, makes one feel not so much like a gallant rider of fiery steeds, as like a hen on a hot riddle, only safe when one is in the air.

And yet there must be something behind all this clamour. These men were not fools; they must have felt that there was something worth arguing about, or they would not have argued at all. Theological doctors often lose their tempers, but they seldom lose their tempers about nothing. We may be sure they wrangled about the right expression, because they felt there was something to express. There must be some solid and simple meaning behind the majestic words, "Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son." What is it?

Well, let us go back to Christ. It is always the safest thing to do. The only way to interpret theology, is to go back to its roots in religion. What did Christ teach about the coming of the Spirit? He taught this one thing quite plainly, that the Holy Spirit could not come to men until after His Ascension; that, indeed, the sending of the Spirit was, in some mysterious way, the purpose of the Ascension. "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away from you the Spirit will not come unto you, but if I go away I will send Him unto you." Even though you doubt that the fourth Evangelist records the exact words of our Lord, there is no reasonable ground for doubting that he records the sense of His teaching. And that is a very definite part of it—that the coming of the Spirit is in some way the result of the Ascension; they are bound up with one another as cause and effect. Now, why?

The crude idea that He had literally to go up to the Father before He could send the Spirit down—had to go to fetch It, so to speak—can at best be only symbolical. In the spiritual world, there is neither up nor down. The Holy Spirit did not wait to begin Its work upon the world and upon the hearts of men, until the day of Pentecost. The

beginning of all things was, that the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters; and our Lord Himself was conceived of the Holy Ghost, before He was born of the Virgin Mary. The change which took place at Pentecost, was not a change in God, or in God's method of working, but a change in men and their vision of His working. The Ascension, like the whole of the Incarnation, did not, and could not, change God's relation to man, which is unchanging and unchangeable; but it did change man's relation to God. The Ascension therefore was necessary, not so much to enable God to send the Spirit, as to enable men to receive it.

What we have therefore to ask is, What change did the Ascension make in the hearts and minds of men, that enabled them to be the subjects of a Pentecost? Well, for the actual picture of the Ascension, the picture of that gracious figure with hands outstretched to bless, going slowly up into Heaven, we have only the authority of St. Luke in the Acts. St. John does not mention it, nor does St. Matthew; the end of St. Mark's Gospel is not by St. Mark, and there it only records that He was parted from them, and taken up into Heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. The sitting down at the right hand of God is manifestly symbolical—God not having a right hand to sit at; and so why should not the going up into Heaven be symbolical also?

If the manifestation of Pentecost depends upon belief in the Ascension, that would appear, at first sight, to be an insecure foundation. It would seem as though we were left, so far as historical evidence is concerned, loving the picture, but uncertain as to whether it is literally or symbolically true. The man who is blind to the beauty of the picture must, I think, be blind to the beauty of the world—blind and

deaf—I doubt if he could hear the trumpet-call of blood-red poppies set in the midst of golden corn, or see the glory of the High Priest's raiment as he stands at the edge of a darkening world at the time of the evening sacrifice. We are left, loving the picture, but doubting if it is true.

We have slender evidence for the picture; but we have the whole of the early Christian consciousness as evidence of that which the picture meant, the triumph of Jesus Christ. Whatever the actual manner of Christ's last parting from the world may have been, it is as certain historically as anything can be, that it impressed His followers as a triumph. It was to them not defeat, but victory; not retreat, but advance; not a mere departure into nothingness, but an ascension into supremacy of power. There is no doubt about the impression; the whole history of Europe is in some sense evidence for that. The historical fact of the impression demands an adequate historical cause, and the picture recorded in the Acts is the only historical cause on record. Therefore the most rational thing appears to be to accept it.

But it is not so much with the fact of the impression, about which there is no doubt, that we are concerned, as with its nature; because it was the nature of the impression that prepared the way for the experience of Pentecost, and the coming of the Spirit. It was because His followers had learned the lesson of the Ascension, that they could go away and wait in quiet confidence for power and leading from on high. What was the nature of the impression produced upon their minds by the manner of our Lord's farewell? It appears to have been, that from that moment onwards, Jesus assumed for them the value of God; from that moment onwards, *He and the Father were One.* It may be true that they only ascribed to Him

at first the title of the Messiah, or the Servant of God, or a man approved by God; and these titles do not necessarily mean that they thought of Him as Divine. But there can be no doubt that, from that moment on, He assumed for them the practical value of God. They quite naturally worshipped Him. He assumed for them a Universal meaning. They were driven henceforth to see the whole world in terms of Jesus Christ. The God Who commanded the light to shine out of the darkness, God the Father, shined through that ascending figure into their hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. In one soul-shattering and bewilderingly beautiful experience, it was wrought into their souls, that, somehow or other, God the Father, the Great Jehovah of the Jews, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, the Lord of the stars and the Master of the seas, was absolutely One with Jesus of Nazareth, Carpenter, Human Comrade, and best of faithful Friends. And from that great experience of the Ascension, issued the experience of Pentecost.

It was to those *in whose souls the Father and the Son had become absolutely One, that the Spirit came.* How they were One—how His humanity was related to God's Divinity—how the Carpenter lived in the heart of the Creator—they neither knew nor cared—they simply knew that He was ascended into Heaven, and had sat down on the right hand of God—perfectly childish metaphors for a perfectly childlike experience. And because they knew that, the Spirit came to them, as He always comes and can only come, proceeding from the Father and the Son, realised as One.

I have no doubt whatsoever that there must be a metaphysical truth behind this spiritual experience; and I would be the last to say that the metaphysicians should not endeavour to find out what that truth is,

and to express it as perfectly as possible. But to the ordinary man in the street, it is the experience, the fact, not the expression of the experience, that really matters. The condition of the Spirit's coming at Pentecost is belief in the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ; He can only come to us as proceeding from the unity in our souls of the Father and the Son.

But, you will say, in that case ought not Pentecost to come to the Church to-day? Ought she not to feel, and manifest to the world, that within her the Spirit of God moves and works—moves and works in such a way that no one can doubt its operation? Ought there to be any doubt, in that case, as to where the new Spirit is to come from? and ought not men to be turning with the utmost confidence to the orthodox Christian Church? But that is just the trouble; for the signs of the working of the Spirit in the Christian Church are so feeble and so few. She does not seem to be out, as those first Christians were, to turn the world upside down; but seems rather pitifully anxious to keep it wrong way up.

It is very hard to believe that the Church is under the urgency of a real Pentecost. Why isn't she? Does she not believe in the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ? Does she not believe that the Father and the Son are One? Is it not in her Creeds? Is it not to the Blessed Trinity that she says, "Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen"? Well, does she believe? Do you? That's the question. Remember, accepting is not believing; it may indeed be the exact opposite of believing. It does not really matter twopence what a man accepts. That is why doctrinal discipline is, and always has been, more or less useless. It does not matter what a man accepts; it matters all the world what he believes.

Has the Church, and have you and I, really grasped what it means, if the Ascension is true—if the Creator and the Carpenter are actually One ? It meant for St. Stephen, if you go back to his discourse in the Acts, that the whole history of the world, so far as he knew it, the whole history of the world and everybody in it, meant Jesus of Nazareth. It meant that upon him the ends of the world had come, and that in Christ the whole purpose and plan of the Creator of Heaven and Earth were brought to a climax, a climax which revealed its significance. It meant that and nothing less to the early Christians, and to St. Paul. Christ was to them the first-born of all creation ; in Him all things consisted or hung together, and without Him they had no meaning. The whole history of the past, the history of Jew and Gentile alike, had been leading up to Him, and the whole hope of the future depended upon, and was centred in, Him. Right from the very beginning, the world had meant nothing but Jesus Christ ; and, apart from Him, it had no purpose and no significance whatsoever.

Now, can we say that that is true of us ? Do we believe that His is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory ? Unquestionably, for the early Christians to sum up their history and their world in Christ, was a very much simpler matter than it is for us ; because the history they knew, and the world in which they lived, was very much smaller than, and much less complex than our own. To them, all that mattered of the history of the world was the history of the chosen people, the Jews. To them the world was, if not the Universe, at any rate quite manifestly the centre of the Universe, and the only part of it that could be of first-rate importance to God. It had been specially created by God for man. Above him were the solid heavens, in which were set the sun, the moon, and the

stars to give him light, and into which his Lord had gone to reign with God upon His Throne. Beneath him was the solid earth, constructed by the fiat of the Almighty, as a home for man; and underneath were the infernal regions, where evil spirits dwelt. The story of man's life upon earth was drawing to an end. Already the last act was being played. The King had come and claimed His own, and His own had received Him not, and He had gone back for a little while; but He was coming again to judge. There was but a little time to wait, and the trumpet-call would thrill to the ends of the world, and Christ would appear in the clouds of Glory, with troops of angels round Him. The nations would be summoned to the Judgment-Seat, and the sheep would be separated from the goats. The Sons of God, who believed in the King, would be taken Home; and those who rebelled, and refused His Love, would be damned to unending hell.

It is a simple, plain, comprehensive scheme; and Christ is the sum and centre of it all. Experts might well say, that this is a crude description; but, for that very reason, I believe it is a very true description of the way in which the early Christians summed up the world in Christ. It had precisely the effect you would expect. It sent them out, fired with burning enthusiasm; sent them out in trembling haste, because the time was short, to gather the harvest in, before the great and terrible day of the Lord came, and the acceptable time was past and gone for ever.

Such was the early Christian's philosophy of history; that was what the world meant to him. What does it mean to you and me? Certainly not that. The number of people, the number of Christian people, who live their lives with a constant sense of expectation of the Second Coming, is, I should say, very small

indeed. That is not the form in which the meaning of history and of the world presents itself, either to the educated man of to-day, or to the man in the street. Time has not so much proved it false, as made it unreal. It is for us, not so much a falsehood as a fairy-tale. And yet perhaps that ought to warn us; for very few fairy-tales are really false, and many of them are intrinsically truer than so-called scientific truth. Fairies may give us the value of facts.

By Christ's strong sooth
Set free from sin,
Poor Cinderella weds her Prince,
As we long since
Were taught and may believe;
For God is found of those who seek,
Exalts the humble and the meek,
And puts the mighty from their seats.
In Christ.
Her tryst,
If Jesus never lived,
Is still unkept;
By those dead ashes where she wept
For Paradise,
She weeps on still,
And moans upon her fate;
The pumpkins still are pumpkins,
And the mice still mice;
Still by the cold and empty grate
She sits in rags and tears.
Through all the years—the empty years,
No fairy comes—nor ever will,
If Jesus never lived.

And because the early Christians may have been mistaken as to the facts, it does not follow that they were mistaken as to their value and the meaning. Had they slept, like Rip Van Winkle, for two thousand years, they would doubtless have changed their theology, but not their religion. Still, for them, the world would have meant the coming of Christ; still,

for them, the time would be short and the call urgent: still they would have had that feeling of a chance that must be taken now, or be for ever missed—of a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune, but which, if it be missed, leaves the ship of human life helpless and keeling over sideways on the mud-flats of disaster. They would have found it harder now, even as we find it harder, to interpret the world in Christ. For me and for my age, history has opened out, to a length and breadth never dreamed of in those days. The story of mankind calls up before me an immense and staggering vision, which St. Stephen could not have seen; it sweeps back into the darkness, along the unending vistas of geological time. When I try to see it as it is, it faces me with a gigantic and bewildering complexity, before which the mind grows dizzy. And yet, if Christ is to be for men what Christ was to St. Stephen, all that history in its complexity must find its simplicity in Him.

For me, as I walk upon the earth, there is no covering vault of heaven, with sun and moon and stars like lamps to give me light; but only the vast infinities of space, through which there move a million worlds as great as and greater than my own. And yet, if Christ is to be to me what Christ was to St. Stephen, the chorus of the million worlds must sing a song of glory to His Name. I must be able to take down my text-books, and read therein all the truth that the labours of the scientist and the explorer have opened out for me; and still through the pages I must be able to see looking up at me the face of the Carpenter of Nazareth. I must be able to find in Him the true value of all the new facts that God has revealed to us. There can be for me no purely secular science; for a secular science denies the divinity of Christ. There

can be for me no purely material causes; for there is only one real cause, which is the Will of God revealed in Jesus Christ. I can never rest satisfied, until I have unravelled the almost infinite complexity of our modern problems, and found Him still behind.

That is what the Ascension must mean to the mind. When, in the mind of man, the Father and the Son become One, immediately there comes the Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son, and drives him out into the wilderness of thought, to find the solution of all problems in Christ. That is the Pentecost of the intellect, and such a Pentecost we need—an outpouring of the Spirit, which sets men thinking as they never thought before, and makes that thinking a joy, because the Spirit dwelling in them gives them utter confidence that, however baffling and bewildering the problems may seem, yet sooner or later the light will come, and they will find their solution in God. "For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the Glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

Nay, more than that. I must be able to look my modern world in the face, recognising that its face is entirely changed, and that, in these latter days, some tremendous power has spoken and transformed its features. I must see it, traversed by a million miles of iron rail—knit together by countless quivering wires, trembling and alive with the speech of men. I must see it, with the very air around me throbbing with messages borne upon the invisible ether waves. I must see it, with the addition of the great new world of the West and its astounding history. I must see it, with this dramatic and extraordinary addition to its population which the modern machine has brought. I cannot regard statistics of population, with their maze of many millions, in a purely scientific and secular light; through every cipher in the millions there

peers out at me a host of baby faces, black, yellow, white, Indian, Russian, German, Dutch; and behind them stands One like unto the Son of Man, Who warns me against purely secular knowledge, saying, "Take heed how ye despise one of these little ones, for I say unto you that their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in Heaven." The population of America leaps in one hundred and fifty years from three million up to one hundred millions, and so it has gone on over the Western world; and I have got to face that fact in Christ. Those millions cannot be to me like rabbits, for they are immortal souls.

I have got to stand in Euston Station, and watch the great black giant that is going to hurl me to Liverpool at sixty miles an hour, and ask what on earth God means by that, just as I ask what He means by the stars. I have got to stand in the devastated area of Lancashire, where men have torn and rent the beauty of Nature—got to stand with the filth of the streets under my feet, and the drizzle of the rain coming down; and, as the darkness descends, and the mills all around me light up with a million shining eyes gleaming and twinkling through the mist, I have got to ask what God means by that. If I do not ask these questions, if I do not seek an answer to them, if I consent and am content to leave these outside God—then I do not believe in the Ascension of Christ, and for me there is no Pentecost. And the results of that are terrible beyond conception.

They are the results which have actually occurred. The Christian Church of the nineteenth century may have accepted the doctrine of the Ascension, but she did not believe it. She was doubtless perfectly orthodox, but she was not Christian. She did not believe that Christ had ascended up on high that He

might fill all things. She was quite content, apparently, to hand over business, economics, and industry to the world, to be managed according to the laws of the world. In doing this she handed them over to the devil; and the result was, first of all, Rochdale, and then the battle of the Somme.

Rochdale and its history are both about as brutal and as ugly as they can be. In the whole long history of the cruelty of man to man, there is little to touch, and nothing to surpass, the abominations of the cotton booms in the 'fifties and 'sixties. The battle of the Somme was a fitting climax to the whole tragedy of what might be called "murder by machinery"; it brought out the essential points, and wrote them large in letters of blood and flame. To stand and watch the working of a 9.2 armour-piercing gun—to appreciate the beautiful exactness with which the monster moved, the unerring accuracy of his aim, the marvellous ingenuity of mechanical device which every part of it displayed—and then to consider the purpose for which that combination of God's gifts was being used, was to see the abyss of the modern tragedy, the Nemesis of secularism, which uses the materials which God gave us for building the Kingdom of Heaven, to build the kingdom of Hell.

If the Church of the twentieth century does not repent, and proclaim open war against war; if she does not make good her right of entry into the factory, the office, and the counting-house; if she is content to remain a department of life, a State institution largely supported by money gained by methods into which it would not be wise to enquire too closely; if she makes it her aim and object to produce the kind of piety which regards religion as having nothing to do with money, except so far as it is needed for the upkeep of altars and the payment

of priests; if she still allows her members to be dishonest, and then to comfort their consciences by pauperising the poor with doles and easy charity; if she is content with merely individualistic Christianity, she will discover that neither doctrinal orthodoxy nor ecclesiastical correctness can save her from the doom which God pronounces upon all rotten institutions; and will learn, as the Jews learned, that God's election is an election to service and not to privilege, and that it is impossible to establish and maintain a monopoly of grace.

The doctrine of the Blessed Trinity must be brought out of the study into the street, and must lay hold on men, not as a theory but as an experience. The Father and the Son must become One in our souls, and, from that unity proceeding, there must descend upon the Church the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who will drive all Christians out to bear the sin of the world, and claim its kingdoms as the Kingdoms of the Christ, crying in their hearts, "Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

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